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FURTHER INCIDENTS IN THE  
LIFE OF A MINING ENGINEER

*By the same Author.*

INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE  
OF A MINING ENGINEER.

“It contains more exciting incidents than many a well-styled novel of adventure or book of exploration, and offers much raw material to the cinema playwright and the novelist of the Backwoods and the Lone Trail. Once more we are reminded that Life is stranger than fiction.”—THE SPECTATOR.

California



*Elliott & Fry*

EDWARD T. MCCARTHY.

[Front.]



FURTHER INCIDENTS  
IN THE LIFE OF A  
MINING ENGINEER

BY

E. T. McCARTHY

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## PREFACE

THE generous reception accorded by both the British and American press and public to Mr. McCarthy's previous volume, *Incidents in the Life of a Mining Engineer* (1918), induced the publishers to beg the author to continue his account of his travels, adventures, and impressions of countries and localities of which comparatively little is known to the general reader. They are pleased to say that Mr. McCarthy readily adopted their suggestion, and the present volume, *Further Incidents in the Life of a Mining Engineer*, is the result. The publishers believe that it will be found even more interesting than its predecessor, which is making a considerable claim for it.

The proceeds of sale of the former volume have been devoted to the St. Dunstan's Hostel for the Blind, and it is gratifying to state that nearly £800 have been handed by the Author to that most admirable Institution. Any profits that may be derived from the present book will be applied to the same purpose.

G.R. & S., LTD.

TO THE MEMORY OF MY WIFE

## CONTENTS

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CHAP.	PAGE
I. TO YUCATAN AND TABASCO - - - -	I
II. CHIAPAS - - - -	12
III. MADE JUSTICE OF THE PEACE - - - -	20
IV. A MULE ON FIRE - - - -	29
V. AMATEUR SURGERY - - - -	36
VI. A SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER - - - -	44
VII. TO MEXICO CITY AND HOME - - - -	53
VIII. SWAZILAND, SOUTH AFRICA - - - -	60
IX. NATIVE RIOT - - - -	68
X. THREATENED SWAZI OUTBREAK - - - -	76
XI. OUR SON'S TERRIBLE ACCIDENT - - - -	84
XII. EVENTS FORESHADOWING BOER WAR - - - -	89
XIII. ABANDON CAMP AND TREK - - - -	98
XIV. STILL IN FULL FLIGHT - - - -	109
XV. 10,000 REFUGEES IN LORENÇO MARQUEZ - - - -	123
XV. HOME VIA MADAGASGAR AND EGYPT - - - -	128
XVII. RETURN TO THE FAR EAST - - - -	133
XVIII. JOURNEY INTO KUANSI - - - -	142
XIX. THREATENED RISING AND FLIGHT - - - -	153
XX. PAHANG AND THE RHAUB GOLD MINES - - - -	159
XXI. TRINGANU AND THE BUNDI TIN MINES - - - -	165
XXII. SELANGOR AND PERAK - - - -	173
XXIII. DUTCH WEST BORNEO - - - -	177
XXIV. HILL DYAK VILLAGES - - - -	187
XXV. HONG KONG TO CHEMULPO COREA - - - -	194

## CONTENTS

XXVI.	COREA, HER EARLY HISTORY - - -	204
XXVII.	SEOUL AND THREATENED MURDER OF FOREIGNERS	211
XXVIII.	RE-VISIT COREA - - -	223
XXIX.	FIRST JOURNEY TO UNSAN MINES - - -	228
XXX.	TAKE UP OUR RESIDENCE AT UNSAN - - -	235
XXXI.	COREAN RIOT OVER GRAVES - - -	243
XXXII.	TRIP UP THE TATONG RIVER - - -	248
XXXIII.	THE EMPEROR OF JAPAN'S BIRTHDAY - - -	257
XXXIV.	A MEMORABLE WINTER - - -	262
XXXV.	UNSAN MINES TO IRKUTSK - - -	269
XXXVI.	IRKUTSK TO LONDON - - -	279
XXXVII.	ACROSS AMERICA TO JAPAN - - -	289
XXXVIII.	BATTLE OF TSUSHIMA - - -	299
XXXIX.	THIRD AND FOURTH VISITS TO COREA - - -	303
XL.	ESCORTED BY HUNG HUSEES - - -	309
XLI.	CHINA TO SOUTH AFRICA AND HOME - - -	316
XLII.	TO SPASSKY COPPER MINES, SIBERIA - - -	320
XLIII.	FURTHER VISITS TO THE SPASSKY COPPER MINES -	333
XLIV.	TO ATBASAR COPPER MINES - - -	337
XLV.	TRANSBAIKAL AND SAGHALIN - - -	342
XLVI.	RUSSIA AND SIBERIA, 1915 - - -	348
XLVII.	SIBERIA, 1916—KHIRGESE OUTBREAK - - -	357
XLVIII.	PALMAREJO MINES, MEXICO - - -	366
XLIX.	SIAM - - - - -	371
L.	BRITISH NORTH BORNEO - - -	377
LI.	DUTCH EAST BORNEO - - -	382
LII.	TO CANADIAN GOLD AND SILVER MINES -	387
	APPENDIX—MILUIKOFF'S SPEECH—COMMENCE-	
	MENT OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION -	391

# FURTHER INCIDENTS

IN THE

## LIFE OF A MINING ENGINEER.

### CHAPTER I.

#### TO YUCATAN AND TABASCO.

THIS work is a continuation of *Incidents and Experiences in the Life of a Mining Engineer*, the gratifying success of which has led me to continue my autobiographical narrative.

My next trip abroad was to Mexico, as General Manager for an English Company owning a gold, silver and copper mine in the State of Chiapas, a Mexican State bordering on Guatemala.

I left England *via* New York to take up this position, and during the following three years my life was typical of what some of us mining engineers have to undergo, an experience that, as I look back, seems a sort of nightmare, mainly on account of my complete isolation from the civilised world, and even from that of Mexico itself; shut up, too, as I was amidst a crowd of Mexicans and Guatemalans who were mostly composed of criminals—either escaped prisoners or those hiding from justice.

Taking a passage on a steamer from New York trading to Vera Cruz *via* Progreso, the port to the State of Yucatan, I learnt from her captain that this mining camp in Chiapas had an unenviable reputation. As he occasionally called at Frontera, the port for those mines, he had picked up all the tittle-tattle about them, which he repeated to me and backed up by showing me an extract from one of the daily papers published in Mexico City, an extract that after giving a brief account of the camp wound up by calling it that "little hell in Mexico." As Mexico City is more than 600 miles distant from the mine, it was evident that my future camp had already earned for itself a notoriously bad name. The captain further endeavoured to cheer me up by prophesying that I should probably return with him on his following trip, but, as the manager whom I was to succeed had been there for some years, I said, "It is not likely that I shall be quite so easily scared away." Again, on

the voyage the Captain strongly advised me to chuck it ; but his fatherly interest in me had little effect on my spirits, though I must candidly own up that I was considerably perturbed not for myself, but because, if matters were as bad as he made them out to be, there would be an end to my wife paying me a visit, as to which we had built a castle in the air.

Off Cuba we sighted some of those lovely sea-pictures so typical of the West Indies, where the deep ultramarine of the Atlantic swell as it approaches the shores shades off into that of a pearly turquoise blue, and then, gathering itself up into a line of curling crests of the most beautiful apple-green tints, comes tumbling down with thunderous roar in one long sheet of dazzling white foam covering the golden sands.

Putting into Havana, we spent two days there. Havana the seat of a great cigar industry and the capital of an island rich in its vegetable productions, yet showed few signs of the great wealth that passes through it. As we dropped anchor in its foetid harbour the stench that arose therefrom was almost unbearable. Going on shore we found the streets full of ruts and mud-holes, and the whole atmosphere of the place depressing. A fellow-passenger and myself decided, therefore, that we would hire a carriage for the day and get away into the country. After much haggling with the owner of a carriage, we at last succeeded in striking a bargain, at a fairly reasonable fare, by which he was to drive us to a *hacienda* about fifteen to eighteen miles distant, there to stay overnight returning the next day. After driving, however, a few miles into the country, we both decided to give up the idea of going on further. The roads were so rough and so full of rut-holes that the experience was not worth the jolting endured ; and sooner than drive back we preferred to return on foot, notwithstanding a very hot sun. We had, before starting, prepaid half the hire of the carriage, and with this outlay we were ultimately glad to be let off from the rest of our bargain, but we did not reach this arrangement without a tussle for, as we had agreed to hire the carriage for the two days, the driver at first refused any compromise. It was only after we had reseated ourselves and bidden him drive on, that he, thinking we apparently meant to continue our journey, at last agreed to accept our terms. Seeing us start to walk back, he expressed surprise that we preferred this to being driven. The sun was too hot, he said, but we replied that the risk from the sun was less than that of being reduced by the jolting to a pulp. "*Los Ingleses !*" (" those Englishmen ! ") he exclaimed, as he drove away.



Taking our time we slowly sauntered back to the town and enjoyed the sight of the country carts and their occupants as they passed us on the road. As we neither knew anyone in the city nor happened to strike anyone who could show us anything of real interest we left Havana perhaps under a false impression, our expectations about it being rudely dissipated; it may have been that we had expected too much. Our passing glimpse of Havana itself left nothing of interest that I can now recall, but all who have travelled in the island speak in the highest praises of its beauties.

Our next port of call was Progreso, Yucatan, and there we stayed a day. The town itself is better laid out than the usual Central American town of this type. Progreso is the port for the capital, Merida, and the two are connected together by a railway. As it was uncertain how long we should remain here, a trip to Merida was out of the question. Progreso is an unimportant place, save as a port—the principal exports which pass through are hemp and maize; but Yucatan! what a world of interest it opened up, what hidden mysteries of past ages are concealed in its forests amongst those numerous cities still well preserved in the depths of their recesses! Standing there, deserted and unoccupied, are ruins full of hieroglyphics, the key to their mysterious writings still undiscovered. Seventy miles south of Merida is the ruined city of Uxmal, by some authorities said to be even older than these renowned ruins of Palenque in the Mexican State of Chiapas. Stephens describes their remains as ranking side by side with those of Egyptian and Roman art. The most important buildings are built of solid stone laid in mortar or cement; Baldwin describes one of them as 329 feet long; all four sides are covered with a solid mass of rich, complicated and elaborately sculptured ornaments, forming a sort of arabesque. Thirty miles south of Merida are the remains of Mayapan, but they are of less importance. To this day Yucatan and its two neighbouring states are full of these hidden cities buried in their forest depths—there they are, and still, so far as explored—which is very little—mostly in a wonderful state of preservation. There is no doubt that at one time this country was thickly populated, and judging by its architecture, by a race evidently far in advance of the Aztecs or Toltecs. Is it possible that this country gave rise to the myth of the far-famed "Atlantis," (may it not have been "Atlantis" itself?) and that the story of its foundering in the ocean was figurative language explaining either its decadence or sudden overthrow?

From Progreso our next port of call was Vera Cruz. My stay

here was short, as *vomito* (yellow fever) was prevalent, and I was not sorry to get away as soon as I was able to find another steamer bound for Frontera. In Brazil, Santos is known as the "City of the Dead," here Vera Cruz is also known as the "City of the Dead," both of these places being so called on account of the dreadful ravages of yellow fever to which they are subject. On going on board my steamer I found it to be a very small Mexican one. The first-class, the only accommodation for passengers, was in the stern of the vessel, and the whole of the deck between it and the funnel was stacked high with hay, with no tarpaulin to cover it. As I looked at the direction of the wind I saw it would be blowing aft when we started, so the risk of fire was very great. If I remained on shore for the next steamer, however, the risk from *vomito* would perhaps be even greater, so I decided to remain, but not without qualms of being burnt alive, or alternatively jumping overboard and being eaten by sharks. When just about to start we were invaded by a crowd of *peons*, or labourers, going to Yucatan to work on the extension of the railway-line then being built beyond Merida. In a few moments the decks were crammed with them; the outlook was anything but agreeable, the more so as the odour of garlic was overpowering and the babel of voices bewildering. At last we weighed anchor and were off on our three days' voyage. Steaming out slowly we passed by the island of San Juan de Ulua, on which stands an old Spanish Fort built about 1630 A.D. but now used as a prison for criminals and political prisoners, and reported to be a pest-hole. In the far background Orizaba, a snow clad peak 17,800 feet high, stood out in clear relief. Above the deck there was only a single awning erected, under which the *peons* crowded; avoiding them I found a solitary corner but in the blazing sun—and along this coast of Tierras Calientes, or hotlands, the sun makes itself felt! All the afternoon I stood there, preferring to swelter rather than to be suffocated by the garlic fumes.

After dark I went off to see what could be obtained in the way of something to eat. Entering the saloon, I found it crammed with the *peons* fighting for their supper, which was being ladled out from a huge cauldron into each man's plate; but the odour was so nauseous that it quickly drove me up on deck again. Three days of this, and how was I to hold out, for even if I starved I could not eat such fare? Getting hold of the steward, I found he had a few bottles of beer and one solitary tin of Huntley and Palmer's biscuits. These I bought up and they proved a veritable god-send to me, on them I lived during those three dreadful days. Later, I again descended below deck along the passage leading to my

state-room, but only to find it thronged with *peons*. The heat and odour were insupportable ; and, giving up the attempt to reach it, I again made my way up on to deck where the crowd appeared to be inappreciably diminished. I had hoped to buy a berth from one of the officers but as we were entirely blocked off from the officers' quarters by the hay, there was no possible way of reaching them, so I was obliged to stay up that night in my corner : the decks were so filthy that there was not even the chance of lying down on them. My efforts to secure a broom were unavailing ; the one solitary steward had disappeared and could not be found, nor could the cook. All that night I sat up and dozed.

As the sun rose next day I wondered how I was going to endure its rays, and a second long wearisome day it proved ; the heat was tremendous. Yet another night was passed, but though still hot, with no breath of air (for the hay cut off the natural draught of air caused by the steamer's passage through it), yet to be out of the sun's rays was in itself a great relief. The third day found us pitching, and the scenes I witnessed amidst that densely packed crowd of *peons* is one never to be forgotten. I was fortunate in that they did not invade my corner.

By nightfall of the third day I was so exhausted that I determined to make an effort to secure my cabin, for I felt I could not sit out another night. I hoped by going down early to find it unoccupied ; but, on reaching it deep down in the vessel, I found a *peon* stark naked lying in my berth. I don't know what I said to him, but whatever it was it had the desired effect, for he jumped up and fled along the passage, not even waiting to pick up his scanty clothes. Taking these up I threw them out into the passage, and shut and bolted the door. Picking up the dirty palliasse on which he had been sleeping I cast it on the floor, and, taking off my own clothes, I slept on the bare slats. With the door shut—for I dare not open it—and with no port to admit air, the heat was insufferable, and streams of perspiration poured from off me, but nature was so exhausted that I soon fell asleep. In the morning I woke in darkness for the candle in the lamp over the door had burnt out : my head felt at least two sizes too big for me, but by the help of a few matches I dressed. There was no water to wash in nor even a basin. Cautiously I crept out and again found myself on deck where even the sun had now become endurable. At about 3 p.m. we crossed the bar and were off Frontera, my port of destination, and my days of real endurance were ended.

Frontera has a few landing stages and warehouses but is itself quite a small village. Here I transhipped on to a river boat,

a small American type of steamer, with a clean saloon, and state-rooms opening out from it and perched up high above the main deck. The transformation was as if from the state of a pauper I had suddenly passed into that of a multi-millionaire. My first object was to get a bath and a shave, after which the steward set before me a *recherché* repast, nor did he stint me, for I was ravenously hungry, and the experience of those three days was soon forgotten. Afterwards I took a stroll on shore; I found nothing of special interest beyond the Mexicans themselves, who were very similar in appearance and in dress to those amongst whom I had lived in Central America.

Early next morning we were steaming up the river with its low-lying shores on either side of us, and a pleasant run we had.

Arriving late in the afternoon at San Juan Bautista, I was met by the Agent of the Company at the hotel where I had taken up my quarters—a small unpretentious one with a large dining room upstairs, and opening out from it the guests' bedrooms. After a brief conversation with him and a promise to call next day, I once again found the old fare set before me at supper that night, the inevitable frijoles, dried meat, and tortillas, but served up with some delicious young maize boiled in milk. That night, tired as I was, proved a very disturbed one, for in the next bedroom to me there was someone very sick groaning throughout it. In the morning I asked the waiter what was the matter with my neighbour; "vomito," was his reply. After eating my tortillas and "eggs fried in water," or poached eggs, I sailed out to find another hotel which proved to be an improvement on the last, though it was not "the hotel." At all events anything was better than being practically in the same room with a yellow fever patient. I met our Agent and we settled up a good deal of business together and he afterwards introduced me to a nice restaurant where I spent the next two days, and obtained very good meals.

At this port our agent there shipped home all "concentrates" coming from the mine where they were sent to be smelted, and received all stores from home, but the transport between this place and the mine was under the General Manager's control. As this was a very important part of the Company's business a brief description may not be uninteresting, to which I may refer again. From the mine to the head of the navigable part of the river the transport was carried on by pack mules, which were the property of the Company; as this was through a very mountainous country we had five stations, nine miles apart, on the road commencing at the mine and ending at the head of the river near Teapa, a fair

sized town. The journey for the pack mules occupied three or four days according to the state of the roads ; thence to San Juan Bautista the rest of the transport was made by river. The first stage was made in flat-bottomed steel barges which were poled along ; the down journey taking only a day, while poling up took from four to five days. At the end of the barge-transport stage of the journey the Company's steamer met these barges, and the " concentrates " coming down and the stores for the mine going up were transhipped from one to the other. The steamer then proceeded down the river to San Juan Bautista, a distance of about ninety miles. She was a stern-wheel-driven steamer with a superstructure on the main deck which contained a passenger's saloon and state-rooms opening out from it, and natives coming from either Teapa or the interior were glad to avail themselves of a passage in her. From San Juan Bautista our Agent transhipped our goods and " concentrates," these latter being sent down by the local steamer to Frontera (a distance of about 130 miles) where they were transhipped on to another going either to Vera Cruz or to Havana, where again they were transhipped to New York, thence again to Liverpool, and finally from that port to Swansea.

These " concentrates," as the name implies, carried the reduced contents, or the valuable portion of the ore won from the mine, and were sent away in double bags holding from 80 to 90 lbs. each, three of these forming a mule-load. Yet, notwithstanding all these many transhipments, a bag was seldom lost. Soon after my arrival we instituted a slight increase on the insurance rates whereby a better system of checking and the disuse of hooks in the handling of the bags were introduced ; this was a great improvement. Thanks to organization and a regular system of checks, I doubt whether, if our freights had only been between Liverpool and London, our losses,—actually very small,—would have been less.

Owing to repairs on our own steamer I was detained here two days. During this time I made the acquaintance of several of the leading Mexicans in town, who all expressed surprise that I was going to take charge of a camp which had, even here, a notoriously bad name. Our Agent—for he was a considerable shareholder in the Company—argued that it was not so bad as it was painted. His grandfather had formerly been Governor of the State of Tabasco, of which San Juan Bautista is the capital. He first heard of the existence of this mine from the Indians when on a journey up to San Cristobal, the capital of Chiapas ; they brought him specimens of the copper ore,—an ore, as it eventually proved, which was somewhat peculiar, being that known as " Bornite." It carried an

appreciable amount of gold and silver, but was very uncommon, as its *gangue*, or the rock in which it was contained, was found to be *Wollastonite*, a silicate of lime and a very uncommon mineral.\*

The Governor subsequently discovered the existence and site of the mine, and it was through his grandson, our Agent, that it was eventually opened by an English Company which he was instrumental in forming. Though this company had exported a large tonnage of "concentrates" during the past few years, it had not proved a success. It was, therefore, up to me to see if I could improve on matters.

Our Agent was a very good type of a Mexican gentleman, and a remarkably fine shot with a revolver, perhaps one of the best that I have ever met. At ten paces he seldom missed the head of a nail driven into a plank, a severe test of fine shooting. The Western cowboys are, in my experience, taken generally, the best revolver shots in the world; but he, in my opinion, beat them. Perhaps the finest shot I ever came across was an old Doctor who lived in Wellington, Salop. After returning from the States I was one day telling my brother about the magnificent shooting of the Western cowboys, when, without saying a word, he drove me over that same afternoon to call on the old doctor and asked him to show me some of his shooting. Buffalo Bill was not in it with him either at the snap, steady aim, or trick shooting. I asked him why he never gave a public display of his skill; his simple reply was that he shot for his own amusement.

San Juan Bautista is a town of historical interest as it was here that Hernandez Cortes first landed in Mexico. From here, too, the renowned old buildings of Palenque are best reached, but the trip is one in which two rivers have to be crossed; when in flood they are impassable so that one runs a considerable chance of being cut off by them, and this entails the risk of a long delay; had it not been for this I should have visited these most interesting ruins of North America. An extract may, I think, be well worth giving from Baldwin in his *Ancient America*.

"No one can tell the true name of the ancient city now called Palenque. It is known to us by this name because the ruins are situated a few miles distant from the town of Palenque, now a village, but formerly a place of some importance. . . . More than two hundred years passed after the arrival of the Spaniards before their (the ruins') existence became known to the Europeans.

\* For a technical description of these mines see an article of mine "Mining in the Wollastonite Ore-deposits of the Santa Fe Mine of Chiapas, Mexico," "Transactions of the Institution of Mining and Metallurgy," vol. IV., pages 169-189.

They were discovered about the year 1750. Since that year decay has made some progress in them. Captain del Rio, who visited and described them in 1787, examined 'fourteen edifices' admirably built of hewn stone, and estimated the extent of the ruins to be 'seven or eight leagues one way (along the river Chacamas), and half a league the other.' He mentions a subterranean aqueduct of great solidity and durability which passes under the largest building.

"The largest known building at Palenque is called the 'Palace.' It stands near the river, on a terraced pyramidal foundation 40 feet high and 310 feet long, by 260 feet broad at the base. The edifice itself is 228 feet long, 180 feet wide, and 25 feet high. It faces the east, and has fourteen doorways on each side, with eleven at the ends. It was built entirely of hewn stone, laid with admirable precision in mortar, which seems to have been of the best quality. A corridor nine feet wide, and roofed by a pointed arch, went round the building on the outside; and this was separated from another within.

"The 'Palace' has four interior courts, the largest being 70 by 80 feet in extent. These are surrounded by corridors, and the architectural work facing them is richly decorated. Within the building were many rooms. From the north side of one of the smaller courts rises a high tower, or pagoda-like structure, 30 feet square at the base, which goes up far above the highest elevation of the building, and seems to have been still higher when the whole structure was in perfect condition. The great rectangular mound used for the foundation was cased with hewn stone, the workmanship here and everywhere else throughout the structure being very superior. The piers around the courts are 'covered with figures in stucco, or plaster, which, when broken, reveals six or more coats or layers, each revealing traces of painting.' This indicates that the building has been used so long before it was deserted that the plastering needed to be many times renewed. There is some evidence that painting was used as a means of decoration, but that which most engages attention, is the artistic management of the stonework, and, above all, the beautifully executed sculptures for ornamentation.

"Two other buildings at Palenque, marked by Mr. Stephens, in his plan of the ruins, as 'Casa No. 1' and 'Casa No. 2' . . . are smaller, but in some respects still more remarkable. The first of these, 75 feet long by 25 wide, stands on the summit of a high truncated pyramid, and has solid walls on all sides save the north, where there are five doorways. Within are a corridor and three

rooms. Between the doorways leading from the corridor to three rooms are great tablets, each 13 feet long and 8 feet high, and all covered with elegantly-carved inscriptions. A similar but smaller tablet, covered with an inscription, appears on the wall of the central room.

“ ‘ Casa No, 2 ’ consists of a steep and lofty truncated pyramid, which stands on a terraced foundation, and has its level summit crowned with a building 50 feet long by 31 wide, which has three doorways at the south, and, within, a corridor and three rooms. This edifice, sometimes called ‘ La Cruz,’ has, above the height required for the rooms, what is described as ‘ two stories of interlaced stucco-work, resembling a high fanciful lattice.’ Here, too, inscribed tablets appear on the walls ; but the inscriptions, which are abundant at Palenque, are by no means confined to tablets. As to the ornamentation, the walls, piers, and cornices, are covered by it. Everywhere the masterly workmanship and artistic skill of the old constructors compel admiration ; Mr. Stephens goes so far as to say of sculptured human figures found in fragments, ‘ In justness of proportion and symmetry they must have approached the Greek models.’ ”

Of Mitla, Baldwin states : “ The general character of the architecture and masonry is much like that seen in the structures at Palenque, but the finish of the workmanship appears to have been more artistic and admirable. These ruins are remarkable among those of the country where they are found. All who have seen them speak much as Dupaix speaks of the perfection of the masonry, the admirable design and finish of the work, and the beauty of the decorations. Their beauty, says Mr. Charnay, can be matched only by the monuments of Greece and Rome in their best days. One fact presented by some of the edifices at Mitla has a certain degree of historical significance. There appears to be evidence that they were occupied at some period by people less advanced in civilisation than their builders. . . . ”

A Mexican who had visited them several times described them to me as hidden in a forest with huge old trees growing out of some of the ruins, and affirmed that in the basement rooms of some of the buildings, where no daylight could possibly ever have penetrated, there were some very fine wall-paintings, whose colours, seen by a lamp, were still very good. As the man was uneducated and could have had no idea of pleasing me by telling me of paintings, I am inclined to believe his story, but as to their being fine paintings, that may be so or not ! The few who have visited these ruins have probably been deterred from making any great study of them on



account of expense and because of the very malarial climate of the place, but, in these days of tropical sanitary knowledge, a small healthy camp could soon be established as a basis from which to work. Palenque with its large dimensions and stone-built buildings, which are reported to be still in a very fair state of preservation, should offer an immense inducement to some Archæological Society to explore it more thoroughly than has hitherto been attempted.

I now return to San Juan Bautista, which is a busy place ; from here are exported large quantities of log-wood, mahogany, cocoa, coffee, and other sub-tropical products. Its population is about 8,000 to 9,000 and is very typically Mexican, *i.e.*, made up of a mixture of Indians and Mestizos, whose colour varies from the white of some of the original Spanish settlers to every shade of the dark chocolate of the Indian, Tabasco is especially noted for its large cocoa estates. It is a State which is little known or heard of by the average Englishman, though not a few know Tabasco-Sauce in those hot little piquant bottles which contain the essence of Chili peppers ; not till I arrived here did I ever connect its name with this State. Mahogany, though still exported, is a declining trade, for as the trees recede further and further back from the rivers so, year by year, their felling becomes less profitable.

## CHAPTER II.

### CHIAPAS.

BIDDING goodbye to my newly found friend I went on board our steamer; it was the first time I had been on a stern-wheel one. Casting off in the afternoon we were soon wending our way up the river, but as the sun went down we tied up on the banks until the morning. Next day we resumed our journey, and a very pretty one it proved. As the river narrowed and we had to follow the deeper channel, we often only had room to sweep by under the trees on the banks, where the branches swept over the tops of the cabins, making a curious grinding noise as if breaking everything up. Later on in the day, owing to its being the end of a long spell of dry weather, it was decided we could go no further.

Much to my surprise Don José Aciga, the head in charge of the mule-transport, came on board. He had been waiting here for me with mules, as by the state of the river he knew our steamer would not be able to make its usual port, and it was arranged to start with him for the mines at daybreak. My baggage was such that it could all be packed on mules, so there was no re-packing to be done. At daylight we were off. Don José was a tall, elderly, but athletic man, a splendid type of a fearless Mexican and a good judge of a mule.

We were very unlucky during the next two days for the rain poured in torrents, and the humid heat and the mosquitoes were at times almost beyond endurance. Up to Teapa, near which he had his house, we passed through great cocoa plantations. Dark forbidding woods they looked, quite unlike what I had pictured them, and quite different from an orange grove where every tree stands by itself with the undergrowth all cleared away leaving only the hard, sun-baked soil beneath it. In these sultry, humid woods, where the sun does not penetrate, the heat was intolerable. The perspiration simply poured off me, and even the rain did not seem to cool that hot, stifling atmosphere.

In those plantations, notwithstanding the rain, men, women and children were at work, but not as a free people for practically all were slaves. The Mexican law is a strange one, no man, woman, or child in this State was allowed to leave his master if in debt. The consequence was that masters would entice these poor, unwary people who were unable to resist the temptation, into their debt, by

advancing either drink, clothes, or trinkets ; they took care that the sum of indebtedness was so great that the people with their small pay could never hope to be in a position to pay it off. No master was allowed to take an employee from another without first paying off the debt, whatever it might be ; even then the debt still remained for the *peon* to pay off to his new master. If one of the men ran away and came to the mine to work where the pay was such that, if left alone, he could gradually work off the debt and become a freed man, he was hunted up, and, if found, first punished by the police and then delivered back to his master. During my sojourn at the mine I earned the hatred of a few of these estate-owners by liberating some of these men ; I paid up their debts and allowed them to work them off ; but the masters would get even with me by bribing some of the men to run away. It was impossible to know who was who, but in the few cases that I afterwards more cautiously accepted I was not again taken in ; however, they were but as a drop in the ocean compared with the thousands remaining who were practically slaves for the rest of their lives.

Continuing our journey the roads proved so heavy it took us two long days' ride to reach the mine. En route we stopped for a short time at Don José's house where I was introduced to his wife and daughter. They were both handsome women ; the former was his second wife and step-mother to his daughter. The house proved to be a far better one than any built at the mine, and I often afterwards envied them it. It was a long, low building, but with lofty rooms all opening out on to a wide verandah running almost the length of the building, save for a room built at either end of it with a row of columns which partly supported a heavy, red-tiled roof. This spacious verandah formed the general sitting, reception, and dining room, with the usual hammocks swung in it, in which we found the two ladies swinging and smoking cigarettes in the veritable *dolce far niente* style of these Southern people.

After a meal and an inspection of the Company's stables we pressed on again in the continued heavy downpour. A few miles beyond this last place we entered a road that had cost the Company many thousands of pounds sterling to construct ; it was only a mule trail, but largely in rock along the flanks of the hills on the side of a valley through which ran a broad mountain torrent, the Rio de las Sierras. The scenery along this trail was superb. From the hot plains we commenced to ascend, following the trend of the valley and gradually mounting up until at the mine the elevation reached about 2,400 feet above sea level. Following the trail, we would sometimes be 300 feet to 400 feet above the river, at others it

would descend to 40 feet or 50 feet, but taken generally the grade ran about 80 feet above it. The mules, as is the habit of these creatures, always took the outside edge of the trail, and owing to the rain causing the track to be very slippery it was not only alarming but dangerous, for one false step and down the precipice mule and rider would have been precipitated! I always found myself involuntarily leaning to the near side of the road with the result that my mule was conscious of my seat being unevenly balanced and I made him uncomfortable; but do what I would, I could not make myself sit upright.

Below us was a rushing, now torrentially swollen river, yet clear as crystal in its many deep pools which formed below a series of miniature Niagara Falls running throughout its length. The very steep hill sides were clothed in a dense sub-tropical vegetation, the palms and fern trees adding greatly to its beauty, and from out of this greenery peeped, here and there, white dazzling marble bluffs. Up one of the smaller side valleys we stopped at one of our mule stations for the night. The muleteers we found here were held up by the weather; they were all natives of Guadalajara which is some 600 to 700 miles distant, and Don José had brought them down with the mules on the Company's behalf, for no mules are found in this section of the country, The Indians in these mountains, which rise up beyond the mine 6,000 to 7,000 feet high, and on the top of which is the tableland or "cold lands," act as the pack carriers, the trail beyond the Mine being impassable for pack mules.

Early next morning, after a miserable night in wet clothes, we set out again, the rain still falling; but what with the attention to my mule as it persistently kept to the very outer edge of the trail, and the transcendent beauty of the valley, whose marvels of loveliness I was to enjoy more fully in my subsequent rides and in bright sunny weather, I did not realize how tired and fatigued I really was until I arrived at my destination. Four miles from the mine we arrived at our saw-mill situated on a flat overlooking the river, and from there we came on a most gorgeous peep of river and hill scenery; out of the latter rose a high peak near the summit of which was a small patch of white perpendicular cliffs completely encircled by a ring of dense vegetation. At the saw-mill logs of cedar trees and some mahogany were being cut up into planks, Although the country round looked as if made up of nothing but forest trees, yet very few hard-wood ones were to be found in it, and, as these became exhausted, I had during my managership to move this camp on to a further site.

Two miles beyond we turned sharply away from the main valley

and followed up a small side one; as we ascended, it looked in front of us as if we would have to go over a steep ridge of hills facing us, but coming up to the base of the ridge we found a small narrow cañon cutting through it and leading into our camp, which suddenly came into view. And there, stretched out before me, was my future home!

First we came on to the mill; behind it lay a white line of low cliffs in which was the mine; in a basin formed by the junction of three small valleys was built the town; and at the further end of one of them and on ground rising slightly above the town were the European quarters; the whole was surrounded by steep precipitous hills densely clothed in a jungle of undergrowth of trees. The two miles we had come up from the main valley led along a trail of loose and broken rocks; it was very trying to the mules, and the only exit from the mine. My first glance round revealed a lovely picture of the beauty of the vegetation resting on the steep hills, forming as it were the steep sides of a cup; but at the bottom of it humanity, as represented by its miserable shanties, was appalling,—crowded into the most limited space, and situated on the bed of loose *débris* and shingle that had been brought down from the heads of two of the three valleys by floods.

I remember that as I rode through the main street it was still raining, and a little after 4 p.m. I counted eleven Mexicans lying in the roadway dead drunk, with others reeling about. My first impression of this camp was not cheering and it afterwards proved to be an even more depressing place than it appeared. As I rode up to the Manager's house and dismounted a tall lanky Brother Jonathan came out on to a small verandah and greeted me with the words: "Well at last you have arrived and I guess you have come to hell." I walked up some rickety steps on to an equally rickety narrow verandah on to which opened three small rooms. Into one of these he invited me. This proved to be his bedroom in which he had lived for about four years. His furniture consisted of a wooden bedstead with a cow-hide lacing on which was an old palliasse, a pillow and blanket, an empty packing-case for a wash-stand, and a tin basin and jug, with a broken mirror above serving as a looking-glass. Clothes-lines were placed across the room on which were suspended his wardrobe, a madeira chair and packing cases for seats. Into the adjoining room he introduced me. This was to be my home, that of the General Manager of the Company. I was wet to the skin—sodden in fact—very tired and fatigued with my two days continued plodding in the rain. My baggage had not yet arrived, as on account of the rain it had been thought better to

leave it behind at Teapa. I sat and talked to him and not once did he offer to find me a change of clothes or even a drink of any sort, and from the look of his own clothes, hung as they were on the rope lines, I preferred to stay in my wet ones. Over four years had this man been here and lived in these quarters as I have described them ; still more extraordinary, he was a rich man, and possessed on the shore of Lake Michigan an "elegant house." Previous to coming here, for over thirteen years he had been manager of one of the largest copper mines in the world, and (as I afterwards found was confirmed) his own house and furniture were on princely lines ; yet here he had been living in this unnecessary discomfort !

After about two hours the Assistant Manager—D—came in and gave me a bit of a cheer-up when I noticed that he was neatly dressed, even though in his mining togs ; he was shaved and had a clean appearance and was an educated man to boot. He immediately offered me a dry change of clothes. Whilst getting into these, after a sponge down by the help of a bucket of water, I recovered my spirits and made up my mind that the outgoing Manager could go as soon as he had shown me round although it had been arranged at home that he should stay a month with me. That evening he asked me how long I expected him to remain to induct me into things, and I replied, "when you have shown me everything and you consider you have completed your duties in this respect, you are, as far as I am concerned, at liberty to go." In five days I considered I was *au fait* with things, and my friend bid his good-bye to "hell," as he had called the camp.

Now I had patiently waited until his departure before making my humble quarters a little more comfortable ; this was easily done by our carpenters, who soon knocked up a rough wardrobe, a few shelves, table and chairs, but my main concern was the camp, for every second man one met seemed to be either drunk or half so. On the books of the Company we had nearly double the men needed if they would work but twenty days per month per man. Then again, men going to work in the mine in a state of semi-intoxication were not only dangerous to themselves, but from every point of view were uneconomical. In the mill I found that the late manager had brought his own men from the States, and that they were quietly resisting and working against me. The miners were Cornishmen, a good crowd under a very capable mine captain ; otherwise, the whole organization was in a rotten state. Two alternatives were open to me—either to let things take their course or to put up a fight in order to change them. Fortunately I found two good men in my assistant and the mine

captain. What my best line of action should be was matter for several days' reflection. Then I decided that the first object would be to build an annexe to the Company's store, stock it with liquor, and sell it much below cost in order to run the many liquor sellers out of camp, and to get control eventually. The next step was to commence a sliding scale of wages, based on the number of days worked per man per month, and to face the task of gradually knocking off all feast days or holidays, replacing them with one day's holiday at the end of the month, followed by a second one for straightening up. On this day, all men, if they answered the roll call three times in the day, would be paid for that day.

The above were the main lines on which I decided to try to bring order into camp ; this I confided to my assistant and mine captain, and I obtained their willing support. I gave notice to my mill superintendent and his foreman, deciding to take the risk of running the plant without them pending the arrival of the fresh set—for though technically good men it was evident they were loyal to their old master, and were determined I should not do better. Lastly, and most important, I set out to improve the workmen's boarding-houses by instituting a system whereby they were better fed, and were compelled to give security for their board. In the Company's store I reduced all food supplies to cost price, but increased the price of luxuries. The underground liquor-sellers soon found that, as I undersold them, their business was no longer profitable, and after a few months of patience there was not one left in camp. Many were the threats to do for me, and during the first few months I and my assistants had to be for ever on the watch especially after dark. Gradually things worked round wonderfully well, and by the time a year had passed our books showed half the number of names, thus considerably reducing the transport of our food supplies (all of which had to be brought up), while the efficiency of each man had gone up fifty per cent. through being better fed, and through the diminution of drunkenness.

All these men are so accustomed to the cheap *cana*, or *aqua-diente* that before going to work on shift each man was allowed his tot, and again on coming off it. The hours of the opening of the bar were regulated ; it was always open in the evening so long as no one was found drunk in it ; when this happened it was closed. The effect on our cost-sheets was that the cost per ton of ore mined and milled was reduced to half what it had been, and the tonnage of ore output nearly doubled. This enabled us to work ore that formerly had not been payable, and yet to show a substantial profit. It was a slow process, and outside my assistant and

mine captain no one knew my programme. Little by little we made the changes, until we had become a reformed company of criminals and vagabonds (for, as before related, my workmen were mostly escaped criminals or else those hiding from justice). But as to the one day's holiday, the least said about it the better, for it always ended in a regular pandemonium! In the morning booths would be erected, and a general market carried on, and even shop-people from as far as San Cristobal (five days' journey from us) were to be seen erecting theirs. It was quite a pretty morning picture to see everyone in their gala dresses, all clean cotton ones, but alas! as the day wore on a regular debauch would set in, singing, dancing and drinking, until by dark it seemed as if all the world and his wife had gone drunken mad. The next day no booth was allowed to be up in the afternoon, and everyone I believe did their best to straighten up. Of course there were always a few exceptions, and these were generally locked up in our jail until sobered down, when they were released. Seldom did our feast-day pass without a certain amount of stabbing, and many were the stab wounds we successfully cured, but not always so. Our method of cure was to probe the wound deeply, and to pack into it iodoform, taking care to pack it well down to the very bottom. We first tried drainage tubes, but had little success with this method; by the former method it was surprising to see how rapidly even really grave wounds healed up.

Another question was that of increasing our horse-power, when I found it was possible to bring in water by a pipe-line that would give us a head of 420 feet instead of that then in use of 120 feet. This was eventually carried out, of which more anon, since it will be of interest even to the non-professional mind as an example of physical difficulties the mining engineer has to overcome in out of the way parts of the world.

The above programme was completed during the first eighteen months of my *régime*, with the result that we succeeded in getting not only an orderly camp, but an average of twenty-six to twenty-seven days' work per man for all those on permanent work, a record, I believe, even for Mexico. But there was one thing those people beat me in, and I had to give in to them over it, and that was the unsanitary conditions under which they lived. By no power on earth could I effect reforms in this respect. Horribly dirty and vile in their habits, and so ingrained in them that they openly rebelled against any innovations not in accord with their customs. Their methods of protest were revolting—but enough when I state that they beat me hollow in their fight against me, and that



till the day I left them they remained as I found them, in as bad and unsanitary a camp as I ever came across. The extraordinary part of the whole matter was that we never had any epidemic outbreak outside an exceptionally bad one of influenza. In the country around us influenza carried off very many, but in our camp we did not lose a case (though we had it in a very severe form), chiefly owing to the unremitting attention of the assistant manager. For a month he devoted his whole time and duties to those of a physician, and was indefatigable in his house-to-house visitation. Outside a mild form of malarial fever the camp was, in spite of its filthy condition, really a very healthy one, which was still more remarkable as being shut in by a circle of hills, wind was scarcely ever felt in it.

### CHAPTER III.

#### MADE JUSTICE OF THE PEACE.

Now to relate some of the ordinary episodes of life that occurred from time to time. Before the late manager handed over his office to me he kindly presented me with two magnificent riding mules, which he had bought on his own account. These I accepted, but treated as belonging to the Company. One was a pure white animal, with hardly a blemish on it, and the other a dark bay, both were easy riders, and both I afterwards taught to trot. The white mule cost £130, the bay £110. In Mexico a good riding mule fetches a high price, though a cargo mule was worth only from £10 to £15, proving how few there are with an easy gait.

One of my first difficulties was with the authorities who lived nine miles from us, and whose police were all armed with rifles and bayonets. As soon as my predecessor (who had succeeded very well in keeping on good terms with the authorities) had gone they attempted a "try on" with me, for one evening our own head policeman reported that a Lieutenant and fifteen police had entered my camp, and had seized many of my best men and foremen, having locked them up in our jail for the night until the following morning, when they were to be taken away as prisoners. This was meant, I knew, to extort money by way of fines out of them on some plea or other brought against them. I waited until the early morning before sending the Lieutenant a polite message expressing surprise that he had not called on me, and asking him to do so. Very soon he turned up, and drew up a guard outside my office of fifteen police, all with bayonets fixed. I was not sure what the law was in Mexico, but in South America I knew that on a Government official entering a private property he had to report his presence to the owner or his representative, and as most of these countries' laws are based on the old Spanish ones, I surmised it also applied to Mexico.

So I began by upbraiding him with his lack of courtesy in not having reported in person the object of his visit, to which he replied that he was *the* authority, and could act as he thought best. I told him he was wrong, that he could not go beyond what the law required of him, and that, if he respected the laws of his country—which, as a loyal subject I was sure he did, and which I also did—I would give him every facility to carry out what they might demand

of him to put into effect. I then asked him if he had the key of my jail ; he said he had. I asked him to allow me to see it, a request which was refused. I promised if he did so to return it to him. He asked me what I wanted it for, and I told him if he gave it to me I would show him, and return it to him. On this promise he handed it to me, when I said "Now come to the jail and I will show you." So we walked down to it, surrounded by his police. I unlocked the door, and told all the prisoners to come out and go to their houses. Turning to him I said, "If you think I am breaking the law you will now take me prisoner, and I will answer in person for the offence, if any." I was very determined, and though refusing my challenge he did not prevent the prisoners leaving the jail. He was, nevertheless, furious, threatening me with penal servitude for defying the authorities, and he left me with a promise to return and arrest me as soon as he had reported my defiance, but not before I handed him back the key of the jail with the request that he would give it back to our head policeman, from whom he had taken it.

During our altercation, needless to say, the whole camp had collected around us. As soon as he had gone I had a letter written to the "Chefe Politico," who lived about four days' journey away, and sent it off by special messenger. The gist of the letter pointed out what had occurred, and went on to state that as manager I could not be belittled by the authorities, or my power—as he very well knew—in an unruly camp would be gone ; that I knew the Lieutenant had acted entirely on his own initiative, and not in accordance with his views, as his reputation was well known to myself. I did not say whether a good or a bad one, for I knew it to be exceedingly bad, on account of his extortions and cruelties. I further pointed out in it that if he so desired I would immediately report and discuss the whole question in person with him ; but I added that as the mines employed a large number of workpeople, if it was at all possible for him to visit us it would be a great advantage both to the Company and myself to have his counsel and his advice after he had made a thorough inspection of the camp, but that, in view of the high position he occupied, I was afraid I was asking too great a favour of him.

Much to my surprise the Chefe soon afterwards came down, escorted by a retinue of attendants, and, staying with me three days, was apparently very interested in the mine, mill and all our affairs, while I on my part did all in my power to make his visit interesting. Finally the Lieutenant was sent for, and reprimanded by the Chefe, and at the same time to my astonishment

the *Chefe* made me a Justice of the Peace—an office which the Mexican law forbids a foreigner holding; but the *Chefe Politico* was a little autocrat, and exercised more authority than even the Governor, for his word was law in these parts of Mexico.

From the moment I had stood up for our workpeople against the blackmailing of the local police and won my case, I became quite an authority in their eyes, and had besides gained their respect. This power gave me the right to imprison up to three months, but if a crime, in my opinion, warranted a severer punishment, then I had to send the criminal to my friend the Lieutenant, with whom afterwards I became on very good terms. I remained on excellent terms with this *Chefe Politico* in the Company's interests, but personally my feelings towards him were intensely abhorrent. I had heard of his crimes, but one was of such a description that it is impossible to write about it. It was perpetrated on the wife of one of my best men. He had tortured her before her husband's own eyes in order to revenge himself on the poor man for an insulting remark he had been heard to make against his dignity. This man's wife was one of the very few women properly married in our camp. The fees of the Church were so high (with us no Mexican would consider himself married under the civil law only) that few, if any, could afford them. The Church in the country round had very unworthy representatives, very similar in behaviour to those I met with in Central America, and the very antitheses of Roman Catholic missionaries I have met in Canada, West Africa, and subsequently in the Far East, and about whom I can only speak in the highest terms.

Just before I arrived, a Mexican priest (though an American by birth) had been staying in camp, and had been entertained and well treated by the manager; in return he was found to have entered the white employees' houses, to have broken open their boxes, stolen what liquor and money he could find. Very properly he was expelled the camp. Subsequently he was, for similar offences in the town of Pichucalco, put across the border into Guatemala. This was the only visit from a *padre* ever paid to the camp during my *régime*. On Sundays we worked the same as on week-days; it was a kindness to do so, for if not the camp would have been on the drink and gambling. Most Mexican *peons*, I believe, are born gamblers; many of them used to gamble away even their month's pay in advance.

Occasionally I would receive long lists of names, with orders to deliver the individuals up to the military authorities, but I used to reply that as no man went under his correct name it was an

impossibility to identify them, and that they must do so themselves. But I knew very well our people always kept a look-out on that one narrow trail into our camp, and if armed soldiers or police were reported on it they quickly hid themselves in the "Monte," and waited until they had gone. Fortunately for us this rarely happened. Occasionally, in order to make an example, if we had an insubordinate I would have him arrested and handed over to the police; the fear of this was always a good deterrent. Although these people, were, when excited, a hot-headed crowd, yet, taken on the whole, they were easy to control, very much like children—easily led, but hard to drive. Notwithstanding all their filthy ways, their coarse language, and their environment from childhood, there was still good in them, and of many of them I was really fond.

The only days we had to fear were our monthly feast ones, and on these occasions I had to allow them to let steam off. With this exception it was quite wonderful how they conformed to our rules, and how punctually they would turn up to roll call, day or night.

Their one great amusement outside gambling was to collect on a moonlight night on our little Plaza outside the store and there dance. On moonless nights for a special treat I would sometimes give them a couple of pounds of candles; these they would stick about, and dance for hours like happy children. There were always a few who could play the guitar. The Mexicans are a musical people, and very fond of anything in the way of a guitar, violin or banjo. The Guatemalans seemed to favour their almost national instrument, the Marimba. This is an instrument played by three or five performers, who, with slender sticks ending in little india-rubber balls, beat its notes by striking on a series of graduated hard pieces of wood strung along two strings, much as on a glorified kind of child's glass piano, but here the glass-notes are replaced by wooden ones. Under each wooden strip, or note, is attached a gourd or inverted pyramidal pointed box, graduated in size so as to respond to the corresponding note above it, and near its apex a small hole is bored, over which is gummed a fine membrane. These boxes thus serve as a sounding board. Some of the larger Marimbas have as many as forty-eight notes. The wooden strips run from about five inches to ten inches in length, one to two inches in width, and are about three-eighths of an inch thick, each strip very slightly concave on its upper surface. To get the exact tone out of them, the final adjustment is made by filing away their outer edges, a mere scraping being sufficient

to tune them up when once the instrument has been regulated. The music from it is sweet and plaintive, being in the minor key. The Guatemalans also play on a wooden harp, crudely constructed and not unlike the Irish harp in shape. Our dances were orderly, and conducted decorously, which was a marvel to me knowing the elements that went to make them up.

At one time we had an American who came into camp from Guatemala ; he played the violin exquisitely, and how quickly the Mexicans recognized his talent was shown by the way in which they went about making collections for him, for when he left us he had received enough to pay his passage to New York. His story was quite an amusing one, for he had started from San Francisco with a travelling troupe who possessed an elephant, monkeys, and a performing goat, while the troupe themselves contained among them a band of musicians. At Los Angeles they did exceptionally well, then making their way down to Guatemala all still went well with them. In Guatemala city they had a great success and had just gone northwards when one of the party ran away with the manager's wife, and the manager ran after the guilty parties. The troupe were then left to themselves, and began to quarrel ; some wanted to get rid of the elephant, as it ate too much, and the expense of its upkeep was out of all proportion to their takings, while the rest of them would not hear of parting with it. The climax came one day when they were about to cross a bridge ; the authorities of the town opposite forbade the elephant to cross it as unsafe to take its weight. An attempt was then made to get it to ford the river. The elephant was adamant, absolutely refusing to cross, and instead lay down in the water near the shore and there stayed all day. As the whole town turned out to see him their gains here were gone. They were then getting perilously near bankruptcy ; they had done the towns in their rear, and to go back meant disaster. They decided to kill the elephant, but no one could be found brave enough to attempt it. At last they got the elephant back and hidden under a large tent ; the town authorities then came down on the company and fined them for the disturbance they had caused. They had then indeed a veritable white elephant on their hands, for as funds were running short they were unable to pay for his rice-rations. It was here that the violinist ran away, as he feared that the elephant would run amok and seek his own provisions, when they would in all probability be thrown into prison. What was the ultimate fate of the show he had no idea. Anyway, he tramped his way through the country, managing to pay his

way along it by the aid of his violin, until he fell on our camp and his troubles ended.

Speaking of their musical talent, I had a bricklayer, an ordinary *peon* of the country, who had saved up enough money to go on a visit to Mexico City, and for this he had worked and put by his savings for years. After a six months' absence he returned to us full of his journey, and brought back with him a repertoire of tunes; there was hardly an opera he could not whistle, and beautifully he whistled them. I often used to send for him of an evening, when we would sit and listen to him. It was, too, quite common to hear some miner or labourer coming home from his work at the close of the day playing his guitar.

As in Central America, the food consisted principally of tortillas, frijoles and dried meat. Once a week we killed for the camp; as in Central America so here, the meat had to be cut up at once into strips and dried, or if kept it went bad in a few hours. There was a common belief that if a beast was killed in the rain the meat was in some way affected by it, and was likely to cause sickness. Whether there is any truth in this I know not, but there was not a native who did not firmly believe in it. They fried everything in manteca or lard, and we suffered severely from this mode of cooking. If we had a chicken, meat or beans, all went into a bath of melted lard. At one time I tried to get a man cook up from Vera Cruz, but as our camp had such a bad name no one would even offer to come, notwithstanding the high wages offered as an inducement.

For the staff boarding house I succeeded in obtaining an old Indian woman, who had been many years cook to my neighbours, the Zapedas, who were the owners of a small coffee estate. She was practically their slave, and was old, and was often beaten by them and very harshly treated. I had myself heard from their own lips how they looked down upon these Indians, and how they upheld that harsh treatment was the only means of governing them. I forget what her debt was to them, but quite a large sum. This I paid off, and they lost their legal right to retain her, but how to get her away was the problem; so I hit on the stratagem of asking them over to dinner with me, and during it a raid was carried out, in which she was captured and brought into camp. The poor old thing turned out to be a really good cook for our boarding house, and was the happiest creature in camp, with her life-long servitude gone and she a free woman. The Zapedas were naturally very angry, but I pointed out to them that it was quite a *quid pro quo*, as they had inveigled some of my men away and got them into their bondage. After a long time they became friendly again

when the feud between us died down. They had been in the habit of obtaining a few planks from our saw-mill, as they needed them from time to time, and this I allowed to continue, in spite of their abuse and open threats, so that in the end they were won round, notwithstanding the great loss and inconvenience they had been put to by the loss of the old lady's services.

The assistant manager, accountant and myself, who messed together, were obliged to put up with what we could get in the way of a cook. Besides her presence we had a constant visitor at dinner, when the old white mule would come to the door, put his head in, and wait for a handful of salt to be given to him by one of us. Behind my house the manager had erected a large stone building for our staff which I finished off, but of all the uncomfortable buildings for Europeans I think this one beat anything I ever saw, for the rooms opened out directly on to the roadway, inconveniently built to erect a verandah, and then again it was so enclosed that scarce a breath of air could circulate around it. At one end of it were the managers' quarters, but after a few days' occupation I returned to my old hut, where I had turned two of the rooms before referred to into one, and had widened and repaired the verandah at the back of it. From this stoep I looked down the valley over a small banana plantation, which was my favourite place of an evening.

It was whilst sitting here one evening, soon after my arrival, that, as I turned to look down over the plantation, I saw innumerable bright little lights rising out of it and coming up slowly in my direction. What they could be I had no idea, unless they were the spirits of the dead. So uncanny was this array of a miniature star-like floating firmament that I hastily ran out to call one of my staff to ask him what it could mean. To my enquiry he said "Oh, they are the fire-beetles." Fire-flies I have seen by thousands, but never any creature so brightly illuminating the air. Slowly they came up, and wafted over us; I secured a couple of specimens, and put them under an inverted glass placed over a book. I could by their light distinctly see to read every word of the page on which they rested. This beetle is peculiar to the States of Chiapas, Campeche and Yucatan. Immediately above its eyes are two little lights, about the size of a large pin's head, and with a light as bright in comparison for its size as any electric light, whilst under the thorax and extending for about a quarter of its length a light is emitted, similar to that of a fire-fly (that is, phosphorescent), but more intense, and covering a much larger area than in the case of the latter insect. The mystery was solved, and night after



night for about three months these sort of lost souls used to come floating up over the hill. The Indians commonly use them as lanterns by placing a few in a small wicker basket, which they tie to the end of a stick, and hold over the trail to light their way by. The beetle itself has a long and narrow shaped body, and is of a light brown colour, about three quarters of an inch long and three eighths of an inch wide. It seemed to use its wings only to rise with, and then, using them as a sail, floated along on any little current of air that might be about. Where they went to and what became of them I never was able to trace, nor did I ever see them returning, though perhaps they may have done so later on in the night.

Another peculiarity about them was that immediately below the thorax there was a curious little bony projection forming a tiny bar; the women used to fasten a piece of cotton to this, and tie the other end of it to the head of a pin, which sticking in their hair or dress allowed the beetle to crawl about and decorate them with its soft lights. I was told that in the season in Mexico City there was quite a demand for these beetles, which were sent from Yucatan to the jewellers there who gave about one shilling to two shillings a piece for them. These the jewellers would take and, substituting the cotton and pin by a very fine gold chain and gold pin, sell to the ladies for the same purpose. I have never come across any description of these beetles in any magazine, and the references made to them in Natural History Encyclopædias give little idea of how bright those little lights are, especially the ones over the eyes, forming, as it were, a kind of port and starboard light. I have kept several alive for weeks by feeding them on sugar-cane, and made many attempts to send live specimens home through the post, either in match-boxes or in a hollow piece of sugar cane, but, although the boxes and cane arrived home, they were always empty, the postal authorities having doubtless discovered the presence of the beetles by the little gnawing noise they make. I have myself often used one of those wicker-work cages to show me the trail.

At a little distance from my hut I had a favourite bathing pool just beneath a little waterfall. In it was another of Nature's curiosities, little fish about two-thirds the size of a common sprat. These used to come to the surface, and shoot out from their mouths little globules of water at small flies or mosquitoes, and unerringly knock them down from a distance of about two to three inches; these they quickly swallowed. I have watched them by the hour and seldom scored a miss against them; to me they were always most fascinating.

Another of Nature's wonders was a species of bat, but not of an interesting kind, for they were the plague of my life. At our mule station at the mine and the one beyond, these creatures used to attack our mules at night. The method of attack is to flutter their wings gently over the mule's neck while they suck its blood from the jugular vein. In the morning the only sign of their having done so is a small, dry stain of blood, hardly noticeable unless looked for. Night after night they would so attack the mules, with the effect that gradually they lost weight and got thin.\* At first we used to change the mules frequently with those at the lower stations, and so give the poor creatures a chance to pick up. From one of the directors of the Tolema Mine in U.S. Columbia, where they had had similar trouble, I got a very good tip which, when put into force proved effective. The remedy was to enclose the stables (on account of the heat they had to be open ones) with old screening used in the mill, and to hang up thorn brushwood above the mules' backs as they stood in their stalls. If by chance then any bats succeeded in getting into the stable they got entangled in the brushwood. Thus in a simple manner we got over a plague that had proved quite a serious matter.

At our Teapa station in the Tierras Calientes, very curiously, our mules suffered from "Calenturas," or malarial fever, in much the same way as human beings do. This I never came across elsewhere; we had to dose them with quinine. After a month at this station we used to change them to another one, and after a month there the disease gradually slackened off. Our mules were always a source of anxiety, what with bats, calenturas, difficulties of feeding, and falling over the precipices—and the latter accidents were by no means of uncommon occurrence. Usually these patient creatures wend their way along very slowly and sedately, single file, with their packs, led by what is called the "lead mule," with a bell attached to its neck, or often by a mare; but sometimes a mule will become fractious, and make a sudden bolt to get ahead of his companions in front of him and push one or more over the precipice. One of our mules once fell down over a 130 feet perpendicular precipice, and the next day was found quietly feeding, with only a few skin-cuts about it, the explanation being that in places trees and shrubs grew out from the sides of the precipice. The creature then must have fallen from one to the other and so had its long fall broken. On the muleteers going down to recover its pack and saddle great was their surprise to find it alive.

\* See also as described in my Chapter on Central America in "Incidents in the Life of a Mining Engineer."

## CHAPTER IV.

### A MULE ON FIRE.

ON another occasion, what proved to be a very serious event happened on our mule trail, but nevertheless it was most amusing, though it ended in upsetting my transport arrangements for some time. I had some demijohns of acid and ammonia coming up for the Assay Office, and I had given particular injunctions to see that they were put on very quiet mules only. Mexican-like, no notice was taken of my letter, and as it happened they put a demijohn of hydrochloric-acid on one side of a young fractious mule, and another of ammonia on the other side. When about three miles from the mine the animal bolted up the side of a hill, fell down and rolled, smashing the huge glass bottles as it did so, when dense white fumes of smoke arose, caused by the mingling of the two chemicals with each other.

To the native mind the poor beast had broken out on fire. The muleteers left the team, and came running into camp, when I was attracted by a large crowd that had gathered round them as they were recounting how they had left a mule on fire, and asking "had ever such a thing been heard of," and calling on the Holy Mother of God to protect them from the devil. The men refused to go back and bring in the rest of the train, and it was with difficulty I could find anyone with sufficient courage to do so. D——'s Assay-assistant was the hero, for he induced two or three others to go with him to fetch them in. I believe the whole crowd of listeners thought these men must be in league with the devil himself to attempt such a thing. The poor burnt mule was nowhere to be seen, but the rest of the train came in.

The story quickly got about, and my transport was stopped. Don José Aciga came up with the rest of the muleteers, most of whom demanded to be sent to their homes in Guadalajara, some 600 or 700 miles distant. I took them to the Assay office, and gave them a practical demonstration of how two cold clear liquids if mixed together would boil, and send up dense white fumes. It was all no use; I was myself in league with the evil one if I could do such things; they would not stop in a country where the mules caught fire; and many of them left. About a year afterwards the burnt mule turned up, a sorry sight with its back and sides covered by a soft, pink-looking skin. I never could find out

what had happened to it during all this time ; I had given orders to shoot it if found. Ever afterwards it was used as a lead mule, and many a time have I passed it walking ahead of the train with its tinkling bell hung below its neck. Many a time too have I told the story, and to this day when I think of it I laugh, for all our powers of persuasion to convince the Mexicans the mule was not on fire were unavailing.

Talking of falling over precipices, I had a very narrow escape myself immediately above our camp, when, pushing my way through the jungle, I suddenly came on the edge of a sheer perpendicular drop. I had no idea I was so close to it, for I overbalanced, and was only saved by catching at and holding on to an overhanging branch while a Mexican pulled me back, and that right on to a snake, but fortunately it was a harmless one. Speaking of snakes, I have hitherto avoided giving an account of the many stories I might have recounted, but one still fresh in my mind I will give. It was early one morning while in Central America, on going down to the mill that I noticed what I thought was an ordinary stone carelessly allowed to get under one of our canvas strakes. These latter consisted of long wooden tables divided by narrow slats into strips of about eighteen inches in width running down their length ; in these were laid a series of strips of canvas each eighteen inches wide and about three feet long, which overlapped each other a few inches. Over these flowed the crushed ore-sands from the mill, and on them the concentrates were caught. These canvas strips again were washed into tanks placed alongside the strakes, and their contents subsequently treated for the gold they contained. Stooping down I very carefully put my hand under the strip of canvas where the stone seemed to be resting, and slowly (or all the strips below it would have floated away) placing my hand on the supposed stone, I very carefully withdrew it, and patted the strip down again. Looking down at my feet I beheld the stone turned into the most poisonous snake we had around us, and beginning to uncoil itself. I gave one bound, and was off to hunt for a stick ; on coming back with it I found my friend had disappeared in the meantime. In withdrawing it I never noticed in any way that it was not a stone, my mind being concentrated, I suppose, on preventing the water from getting under the canvas strips, but it was a very unpleasant experience, though only after I had realized what the supposed stone really was.

It was not long after my arrival that rumours of rupture with Guatemala began to reach us ; then we heard of soldiers arriving

at San Juan Bautista, and of their being on the march to the frontier. Some of the Guatemalans left us. Next I received a notice that our mules might be commandeered, and instructions to make arrangements accordingly. After my experience in Central America I began to think I was a Jonah, for here again was the likelihood of war. On the border near us was a small skirmish, in which a few were killed on either side. A rifle picked up after the action I possess to this day. War was almost a certainty when the United States fortunately stepped in and declared to Guatemala, who was the aggressor, that she would join with Mexico against her if she persisted in her demands; and in the nick of time we were saved from what would have been a very perilous position had our mules been taken from us.

One day a young American came into camp. He was one of a party of surveyors—four Americans and one English—accompanied by an escort of soldiers, who had been sent in to survey the country to the south of us. This young fellow was suffering from bad eyes, caused by some poisonous insect bite. They had put him on a horse blindfolded, and sent a soldier to lead his horse and bring him into our camp. He remained with us some time, while we doctored the eyes. One of their own party had already been killed by some of the Indians, whose village they had been about to enter. He reported that an Englishman and an American, both miners, had been killed just after passing through their camp, and that they had come across from the Pacific side; but he reported that in this case it was due to their own fault, as they had treated some Indians badly. The Englishman, he stated, had told them he knew me, and had been with me on the West Coast of Africa, but as he had forgotten his name I could not identify the man. In our monotonous life we were sorry to lose him when he went back to rejoin his party, a nice, quiet young fellow, but hardly fitted for such a rough life. He came, I remember, from Los Angeles, California.

In the course of time D—, the accountant and myself sallied forth from our camp, but where to go was the question, for we were bent on a two days' holiday. Anywhere so long as we could get up on to some hill whence we could obtain a clear view, for we were dying to get away from the shadow of our little circle of hills. Accordingly, each mounted on a mule, we made our way to the village of Solucichappa, our nearest one, nine miles distant, and composed only of a few reed thatched huts, where the local authorities and the police lived—a dead-alive place. Twelve miles distant from here is the village or small town of

Ixtacomitan, our objective. The road to Solucichappa is almost all the way along one narrow bridle track overhanging the steep precipices, down which one can look for hundreds of feet in places, and seldom for less than a hundred. At the bottom flowed our river, clear as crystal ; in places where it widened out it slowly wended its way along as a deep blue river ; where it narrowed again it formed a series of waterfalls, with their whirlpools and rapids below them, boiling, roaring, and working up into masses of white foam. The steep cliffs on either side of it were clothed in a heavy vegetation, and had innumerable trees growing out from their sides, but in places were bare, and looked even terrible.

Occasionally we passed a wooden cross, erected to mark the site of some murder, which, instead of being of rare occurrence, is an object frequently met with. The ride was an extremely pretty one, the sub-tropical vegetation, with all its curious forms, helping to make it especially so. But our object was not to stay and admire these beautiful river and hill glimpses ; rather was it to get away from them, to surmount one of their peaks and get up into skyland, and there to make celestial observations in preference to terrestrial ones.

After leaving Solucichappa our route left the river, while we crept, stumbled, jumped or scrambled up the hills, leading our horses. A council of war was held, at which it was concluded we would die of heat apoplexy if we continued thus to lead them, and that it would be better to resume our seats, and if need be, kill the mules in preference to ourselves. So we mounted them again, while my beast made such violent contortions to clamber up the almost perpendicular ascent that all I could think of was that it was easier to keep one's seat on a buckjumper, for this was a kind of combination of a buckjump and a sailors' drunken roll. Our feet, too, would get jammed between the rocks and the sides of the mules, but our unsightly wooden Mexican stirrups prevented them from being thus reduced to a pulp. I have since seen elephants go up even a steeper ascent, but never before nor since either horse or mule.

At last we arrived at the top of a hill, where we found the heavy undergrowth had given place to a swelling roll of grass-land. Our mules rested, for they were absolutely exhausted and refused to move. Off-saddling them, they laid down, and after a time began to roll. Seeing that they had recovered we again saddled up, and rode along the flat, veldt-like top of this range, until we came to the opposite side of it, where we obtained a most magnificent view, looking down across the great Tabasco plain, with

its numerous maize, cocoa and sugar plantations, and away on the eastern horizon to Campeche and Yucatan, while on the northern horizon were heavy banks of clouds, which gave out some very curious light effects. There we stood, and gazed out on the horizon as if we had never before seen one. We felt as though we had suddenly emerged out of prison into daylight, and indeed we had done so. Continuing our journey we found a more gradual descent than on the side we had come up, and for about six miles as we rode we kept this most glorious panorama before us, on which we genuinely feasted. At length we began to enter the maize plantations, and lower down were those of cocoa.

Arriving at the village or small town of Itaxcomitan, after stabling our tired animals, we started out to inspect it. Itaxcomitan was almost entirely composed of reed-walled, thatch-roofed huts, with a sprinkling of red brick and red tiled ones. In its centre stood a large church, with a comparatively new roof, but its walls looked very ancient and weatherworn. Not a soul could I find who could tell me anything of its age or history. On entering it were the usual Roman Catholic figures, one I suppose meant for John the Baptist—a small doll of about nine inches in height, dressed in a modern Mexican outfit, with a straw hat trimmed with blue ribbon. In one corner stood a curious wooden tower reminding one of an ornamental dove-cote's upper structure, and in its niches were a number of sacred figures. In another corner of the church stood a life-size model of St. Stephen, but dressed in a modern suit of velveteen. The only thing of any value was a very ancient solid silver lamp, beautifully chased, which I would have liked to steal immensely, but my conscience forbade such sacrilege.

The Padre, the people told us, occasionally paid them visits, and on asking if they were only on special feast days, "no," they said, "only when he feels like it."

The people about were of the usual Mexican type, the women in their cotton dresses, with their low-necked and short-sleeved camisas, while a few Indian women strolled about with a blue cloth tightly wound round their loins, reaching to their knees, which formed their only garment. The simplicity and quiet atmosphere of the place, with its baskets of cocoa, coffee and bananas for sale in the streets formed quite the most rural and picturesque side of Mexican life I had hitherto come across. There was a kind of Adam and Eve environment as seen at surface about this little place. Not until after dark did we get our supper, and as we had eaten nothing but a banana or two since about 5 a.m. it was a most welcome repast, and (for this part of the world) quite

a sumptuous one, consisting of fried chicken, eggs, beans, and tortillas, and a kind of native cheese. For beds we had straw mats laid over a wooden frame strung with raw hide thongs, and notwithstanding a pattern of squares that had imprinted itself on my body through the mat, I slept well.

At daybreak we set out on our return journey, but in the descent of the hill before described we came on a better trail, though even then we had to lead our mules down it. In one place we got mixed up with some cargo mules coming up; so narrow was the trail that it was impossible to pass each other freely. Two of the cargo mules got pushed off it, and rolled down the steep sides of the hill until out of sight. I nearly got caught by them myself, but escaped by dodging between them, when my mule had his bridle and his cinch torn, while my two companions' mules were similarly somewhat damaged. After about five minutes spent in disentangling ourselves we got free, and called a halt for repairs and then, resuming our journey, we returned that evening to the mine without further mishap, all the better for the break in the monotony of our lives.

During my sojourn here, as we had no medical man we had to be our own doctors and surgeons. D—— was more of the latter than I was, I hated the work. In stab-wounds and sewing up cuts we were both pretty good. The Chemula Indians, who cut firewood and roughly squared logs, also timber for the mine, were always cutting themselves about the legs, and they gave us the most trouble, for their skins were so thick and tough—more like pigs' skins—that we failed to get a needle to pierce them until we hit on a dodge which acted admirably; this was to take a fine bradawl and bore the holes with a piece of cork placed beneath the skin, and then to pass the needle with the gut through them. I used to abominate this job, but it had to be done. They were either stoical or had no feeling, for they never flinched an inch under the operation.

These same Indians were fairly numerous in our district, physically a sturdy, broad shouldered, well set up people. No one could induce them to enter the mine; only one all the time of my management ever did so. They were truly hewers of wood and drawers of water. They spoke an Indian language, which, to my ear, was unpronounceable with its multiplicity of consonants clustered together, apparently with the minimum number of vowels that could be used to produce a sound. In features they were not at all unlike the Northern Chinese, and as brown as berries. They still refuse to pay taxes to the Mexican Government, and they allowed no foreigner to enter their villages. I frequently asked



some of the oldest of our workpeople if they would receive me in their village, but they always said they had to do as their Cacique instructed them, and therefore could not. The loads they carry were actually equal to those we put upon our pack mules, or 240 lbs. weight per man in the hilly country, and these were not merely carried short distances, but over long ones, fifteen to twenty-five miles being about a day's journey, varying according to the steepness of the hills. These loads they perched on a wooden frame work strapped to their backs.

San Cristobal (the Capital of Chiapas) was five days' journey from us, uphill the whole way, and yet it was the common practice of these people to carry a passenger up on their backs, using a long pole with which they poled themselves up the steepest hill. We had also a few Chapeneco Indians, and a few of a more intelligent tribe, the Jucheticos, who came from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, and who are a very superior race, many of the women being handsome both physically and in features. They claimed to have a written language of their own, and that the Mexicans never had conquered them though they paid tribute to them, and that they were free to live under their own laws, but whether this was true or not I was never able to get confirmed. The women dressed better than the Mexican women, and had a most remarkable and very artistic kind of linen neckwear, which was usually an heirloom, handed down from one generation to another, and worn only on very special occasions. It consisted of a very broad or wide collar, running in pleats or frills, each worked in embroidered patterns, and so made up that it could be folded up and worn in five different forms or shapes, one in particular reminding one of the high frilled ruffs standing up and around the head worn by the ladies in Queen Elizabeth's time. I tried many times to purchase one of these from them, but being heirlooms no bribe would tempt them to give one up. On asking them to make me one they said it was a special trade, and they did not know themselves how it was done.

These people, with their much more refined features than either the Chemula or Chapeneco Indians, always interested me, but were so very reserved, self-contained, and kept so to themselves, that it was most difficult to learn anything about them, neither could I find the town they came from, though they described it as a large one, situated on a prominent hill on the Isthmus where no Mexicans were to be found. The Guatemalans were so like our own Mexicans I never could distinguish one from the other.

## CHAPTER V.

### AMATEUR SURGERY.

OF accidents in the mine we had many. The Mexican character is so careless and so inconsequent that it was not surprising, though one naturally did all that was possible to endeavour to prevent their occurrence by taking extra precautions against them. As an example of their utter disregard for their own safety :—One day, being in the mine, I heard a blast go off in a part of it where I knew it was not the time for firing. Making my way down there through a shaft by the ladderway I met a boy coming up from below who said two men were killed. Near the foot of the last ladder I stumbled over a Mexican lying there, who told me he was done for, and to go on and see if his “companero,” or chum, was alive. Thinking, as he spoke so clearly, he was not badly hurt, I went on a few yards, to find his chum lying dead near the face of the drift. Going back to the wounded man I found him terribly mangled. We had some difficulty in getting him up the shaft, as the poor fellow was in great agony. On his arrival at the hospital we found his arm was smashed and mangled about half way between the shoulder and elbow, his other arm badly cut and bruised ; while his stomach was a mass of small grit and stones, and we feared perforation. That night we fixed the arm in a bath of disinfectant, and next morning we decided it had to be amputated. My Red Cross ambulance classes served me well in knowing about the arteries and veins, but neither D— nor myself had ever put anyone under chloroform. I undertook this job, and to act as surgical assistant. Owing to the man’s other injuries I could not bring his other arm across to the side we were going to operate on, and the difficulty was about his pulse. However, after getting him off I had to keep slipping round to the other side in order to feel his pulse. The arteries and veins I managed to tie up successfully, and between us we got a very good flap. D— undertook to saw the bone, but the saw got stuck, and for a minute or so neither he nor I could move it. In the end the operation appeared successful. At the same time we removed as far as possible all the bits of grit and stone, and generally dressed and washed up his wounds. Our patient continued to do well for four days, but on the fifth a high fever set in, and he died, not from the amateur operation but, as we afterwards proved,

from peritonitis. On removing the bandage on the amputated arm we found that it had been healing well. We had used our favourite antiseptic, iodoform, upon it.

Now the cause of this accident was disobeying orders ; those two men had been at work on a machine drill, and in the previous round of firing one of the holes had mis-fired, and not gone off. This hole was marked, and they were told not to touch it. Instead they had been trying to untamp it, and extract the charge. There was no advantage to be gained by their doing so, as they were not on contract, yet out of sheer devilment they were attempting it, as we learned from the boy, who himself escaped without a scratch, and was talking to the two men at the time of the explosion. During this man's illness he was conscious most of the time, and it was pathetic how patient he was, and how suddenly the whole man's nature seemed to be changed. He was more like a great big child that sought to be treated like a little one—so gentle, and all the usual coarseness of language gone—nothing left but a gentle suffering little one.

Now to return to the substance of my story. Shortly after his death, his brother, a fine young Mexican, pleaded to have his brother's position in charge of the drill, and as he had served his apprenticeship as an assistant to another one we gave it to him, and both the mine captain and myself pointed out to him how his brother, through disobedience, had lost his life, and warned him against attempting to untamp any mis-fired holes, which, owing to a poor fuse, sometimes troubled us. Again, within a few days after he had taken charge of the drill, I was in the mine, and about the same time of day as the last accident, when I heard a blast go off. Climbing down the ladders I pushed through the smoke to the end of the drift, only to find the poor boy and his companion blown up, and knocked about most horribly, both lying on their backs, and both dead. Exactly the same thing had happened again ; there was still a bit of dynamite unexploded, lying near by, showing they had reached the charge, and were engaged in recovering the hole. They had been warned, and both knew what had happened before, but I suppose they each thought they were clever enough to succeed where the others on a similar task had failed.

One cannot put sense into these people, but in my experience it is very largely so with our poorer classes ; they don't seem to think. A few nights ago, for instance, I was at the bottom of a deep tube station while a raid was going on up above, with a crowd densely packed round me ; I pulled a pipe out and began to smoke

it. A young woman near by said "Look at that 'ere gentleman ; 'e's smoking, it can't be so bad." It only then dawned on me that most of them were thinking they might still be bombed. With perhaps splendid latent qualities, they are unable to think for themselves, or use their own deductive powers. In my observations of all classes of humanity the lack of deductive powers is largely the cause of so much ignorance, not only among the poor—though more prevalent among them—but also amongst the more educated ; in other words, they don't think, and are like sheep, and will follow their leader be he a good or a bad one. Many an uneducated man though, both English and native, have I come across really brilliantly clever in his way, quick in his perceptions and as quick in his deductions, and I doubt much if our form of education helps to develop these latent faculties. This to my mind explains much that is so obscure, so mysterious, so contrary to all one's educational ideas. One sees it often in young children, afterwards apparently to be lost as they reach the adolescent age.

But to return to my subject. A few days after this accident we had another, for accidents always seem to come together. A stranger walked into the mine through an old adit level when a change of shifts was taking place. No one noticed him, and he walked to a winze, or small shaft over which was a windlass, and somehow or other fell down it, 60 ft. deep. On going down expecting to find him dead, he was standing at the bottom, seemingly all right, but a bit dazed. We got him into the bucket without effort, and brought him to the surface, and he walked to the hospital. I left him in bed, and put a policeman on guard to see that no one brought him any drink, for it is a Mexican custom to try and get an injured man drunk, but done in a kindly way to make him forget his pain. Half-an-hour afterwards I returned and found they had succeeded in giving him drink ; he was sitting up in bed very lively, laughing and talking, when suddenly he fell back dead. It may have been from a clot formed, or what not, but there he was dead, and when we more closely examined him afterwards, with not a sign of any injury about him. He must have fallen on his feet in the shaft, or otherwise he would have shown some abrasions or contusions.

Of another kind of accident (let me so designate it), D— had a nasty one while I was away one time in Teapa, when a native was stabbed in the abdomen, and all his entrails were protruding. He did his best to return them by gentle pressure, but failed to do so ; as a last chance for the wounded man he tried to force

them back. Failing again, he called for a man with big hands and of a strong build to try what he could do, and he succeeded in placing them back. D—— then sewed up the wound, and left his patient to die, as he thought, but instead the man recovered, though for months he remained a shadow of his former self, unable ever again to do manual work ; yet he used to weigh and tally or count the concentrate bags as they were shipped off, and do similar light work. I have told some of my doctor friends this yarn, but they, I think, have accepted it as such, whereas from those who were present and from D—— himself have I heard the full descriptions of his dilemma when he failed to get the entrails back. I could add many stories of our medical experiences, but I will refrain, only saying that D—— ought to have been a doctor. He was so splendid—he enjoyed it—I loathed it.

One or two more, however, I must relate. Our head blacksmith was a well-known desperado, who more or less terrorised the camp : a good blacksmith himself, but no good in controlling others under him. I had sent for an English blacksmith, but had told the former that, while his pay would not be reduced, he would be under the new man when he arrived. As I was dressing one morning, and had just finished putting on my coat, a knock came to my door, and the blacksmith walked in without permission. I noticed he had his pauncho on ; it was a hot day, and unusual to see him in it. I had a big table in the room, and divining he might be up to some mischief I kept it between him and myself, walking slowly round it as he came round. He was arguing about his position. I told him to clear out and to go down to the office, where I would be in ten minutes, when I would discuss the matter with him. He went out as told, and a few minutes afterwards I left my room and was walking down to the office when I saw my second blacksmith staggering up the hill towards me, then falling down. We picked him up, and carried him into a house near by, where he died ten minutes afterwards. There was no sign of blood about him, but on stripping him there in the groin was a stab. Then it came out that the head blacksmith had gone up to him, held out his right hand to shake hands, and called him " Amigo "—that is, friend—and as they clasped hands, he, with his left one, drove his knife into him. I sent for our head policeman, and ordered him to arrest the culprit, but he assured me there was not a man in camp who dared to, and besides, if anyone dared, the camp would liberate him. So I walked down to where the man had gone, and told him to give me his knife. That knife in the first place had, I felt sure, been meant for me,

and had been hidden under his pauncho. I felt quite confident he would obey me, and had no fears of him. He did as he was told, and I personally locked him up in the jail. The same day I sent him to the police authorities, but in two months he was out of prison, and wrote asking me to reinstate him. His friends had collected about £20, and had bought him off.

The authorities came up after the murder, and demanded a *post mortem* on the victim. We had no doctor within 100 miles or so, but I bluffed them. I had my Red Cross certificate, signed by Earl Granville; this I produced, and expatiated on his name and signature, and pointed out the Red Cross on it, so that they were persuaded I must be a qualified surgeon. Forthwith we exhumed the body, and before them, by the light of two candles, we, D—— and myself, dissected the wound, a mere formality. The absence of blood was unheard of, and I think curiosity had something to do with their demand. I said it was now clearly proved he had bled internally, and that was the cause of the death. With this they were satisfied, and afterwards they sat down to supper with me, but I had no appetite, for the whole business had been so ghastly, carried out too by the dim light of tallow candles, and on a body that had been buried several days. I managed, however, to keep my wrath to myself, but I hated the sight of these individuals, who came and gloated over the *post mortem*.

Yet another example of our medical apprenticeship. As we were sitting at supper one night we heard an explosion in the mill, when I rushed down without waiting for a light, nor did I waste time by going round by the bridge across our stream, but went straight through the latter. On arriving outside the mill I found a crowd, and, pushing my way through it, found in the centre a man with his clothes burning and on fire. No one seemed to know what to do, for all were stupidly gazing on the poor victim without so much as raising a hand to help him. Throwing him down I called them to beat out the fire with their "Zarapes," or shawls, as I rolled him on the ground. Poor man, he writhed in agony, and was fearfully burned, yet strange to say he lingered on for about eight days before he died—a very long time to have survived with so large an area of his body burned. Only one woman could we get to help nurse him. The best our limited surgery could devise for him was to wrap him up in cotton wool, with iodoform well powdered over his body, but it was a hopeless case from the first. Sending for his father, who lived some distance away, he arrived just in time to see his son die; he had been carried in on the back of a Chemula Indian. Owing to the terrible suppuration

of the burns and the odour of the iodoform the case was a very trying one, but the gratitude of the old father well repaid us for the really *mental* effort we had gone through in forcing ourselves to attend to so sickening a case. What had happened to him was that, while looking for something by the aid of a candle light, he went too near a kerosene tin, when the light flashed back, and exploded the tin with its burning contents all over him, and nearly set fire, too, to the mill.

A few years afterwards my younger brother, who was superintendent of the Forty-stamp mill at the Paddington Consuls in West Australia, was burned to death in a similar way. He, on four men coming to his rescue, called out to them "Don't waste time over me, I am done for, but get all hands out of the mill, or they will be burned too," for the mill was on fire, and was ultimately burned down. He then threw himself into a mud tank, but died a few hours afterwards. Originally he went out fruit farming to Mildura, N.S.W., where he came to grief by reason of his trees dying through the failure of Chaffey Brothers, whose pumps ceased to supply his orchard and many others with the needed irrigation water. On my advice he had gone into the milling side of mining, and after about four years had got on sufficiently well to occupy a mill superintendent's position. His last letter to me was full of enthusiasm and liking for his occupation. A generous, open-handed boy, who never kept back a penny for himself when he could help a pal. In these hot climates, where, too, the kerosene is not to be depended upon, going too near an open can with a naked light is, as the above incident proves, exceedingly dangerous.

Another incident that happened during my management is worth relating as giving some idea of the life we led. It happened soon after the above one; when sitting up rather late I heard a revolver shot ring out in the stillness of the night, a bright moonlight one. Going down to where the sound had seemed to come from I found our Chief of Police standing covering with his revolver a man whom he had standing up against a wall with his back to it. On looking down on the ground I saw a pool of blood at the policeman's feet, and on asking him if he was hurt he replied that he had been stabbed by the man. Taking his revolver from him I told him to go home, and put the revolver in my pocket, telling the man as I did so to come with me, and I marched him off to the jail, having previously taken the key of it from the policeman. Finding it empty I locked him up, and left him till morning. Then, calling up D—, we both went to the

policeman's house to examine into his damage, when we found he had been badly stabbed in the side, from which the blood was still running. Binding and plugging up the wound we left him till morning. The wound proved to be a nasty one, and from the loss of blood the man was a long time before he finally recovered. On going to the jail next morning I found the prisoner in great agony. It appeared the policeman had shot him in the left arm, the bullet, having entered at the wrist, had travelled up the arm, and passed out at the elbow joint. The poor beggar had said nothing about it the night before, and I had no idea at the time that he had been wounded. So we had a new sort of surgical case on our hands.

Fortunately for us no one carried firearms but our own police, though every man always carried a knife. Personally I seldom carried a revolver, save in the Western camps—which everyone did, as often as not, merely as a matter of fashion. My idea was that one is safer without firearms as a desperado is unlikely to shoot an unarmed man, and if armed the very moment of hesitation one would naturally give before shooting in self-defence would in all likelihood be fatal. With these people, too, one felt one had a moral control over them, even with the worst of them, and in dealing with them I never felt nervous, nor do I think any of the staff did. There was only one man in camp I did not like; he was one of the rum-sellers whose business I had ruined, and who had taken to a labourer's life. I had an idea he had done so to wait his opportunity of having his revenge on me, and I was often tempted to turn him off the property, but as he was a steady worker I refrained from doing so. I was quite wrong in my surmise about him, as I will presently show.

At one time we were getting short of dynamite stores, and hearing that a small schooner had come in with these explosives for us, but had been stopped by the San Juan Bautista Municipal Authorities in coming up the river, I hastened down to that port to see what arrangement could be made to land them. So, leaving the mine, I started on a lonely ride to Teapa. Before starting on this journey I strapped a big Colt revolver on my saddle (rather a contradiction to what I have just written, but I may say it was never even loaded, the reason being that the Indians always went in terror of anyone with firearms). There had been several of our men murdered on this road, doubtless for their money, when leaving the mine for their homes. Arriving at José Aciga's house I spent the night there; going on next day to the river I found our barges were down the river. The only canoe available would only just hold Don José and myself, with an Indian paddler. In



the very early morning we set off and travelled fairly rapidly, as a strong current was running. But we had not gone far before our position became so cramped we had to take it in turns to hang our legs over the sides of the canoe. As the river was full of alligators I imagined one of these monsters having a bite at them.

With the sun blazing down on us the trip was not one of my enjoyable ones on a tropical river, and at sunset the mosquitoes were perfectly awful; they would gather round the tops of my boots, and I dared not lean over to swish them off for fear of upsetting our frail craft. A little after dark we came to our half-way house. On going up to it we heard Don Ramond, the proprietor, had been buried the day before. On asking what he had died of they answered "Vomito," or yellow fever, when we decided to continue on, and not to sleep there. After a good supper—and we needed it, for we had had nothing since day-break—we started on down the river. Through the night we travelled, and until 11 a.m. the following day. During all this time our Indian had steadily paddled on, and beyond saying he was sleepy he never complained of even being tired.

It was on a Sunday morning that we arrived off San Juan Bautista, and a most welcome sight met our gaze, for there on the river's bank was a restaurant and a number of people sitting at little round tables having their mid-day repast, and there too sat our agent amongst them. We were indeed in luck, and were not long in joining him, and seldom was a meal to two tired men more welcome. Amongst the party were some American hunters who had come down here to shoot alligators for their skins, a successful process having just then been invented to cure these, and from being of no value they had suddenly become valuable. Later on it was reported there was not an alligator left in the river. The river, too, was known for its many ibises, and these also they cleared out, as their plumes were fetching high prices as ospreys for ladies' hats. We were a pleasant party that afternoon, as we swung in our hammocks smoking cigars and chatting.

Next day I met the authorities; their fears of the schooner blowing up were quite ridiculous, and for no consideration would they allow it to approach the town, but we were able to make a compromise, whereby the little craft was allowed to come up the river and anchor a mile beyond the town. Instead of the usual Mañana delay the business was promptly completed, though our schooner had hitherto been held up many days, on which we had to pay demurrage. Leaving by our steamer the following day I returned to the mine.

## CHAPTER VI.

### A SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER.

I WAS at this time very busy on my pipe-line, a difficult feat to accomplish, as we had to take it through a ravine and along a line of perpendicular cliffs at the top of which was a high hill, with a steep ascent right from their very brink. In order to carry it round these at some fifty feet above the river it was necessary to get men to sling themselves by ropes hanging down the precipice, fastened at their upper edge, but not a Mexican would tackle the job, not even with the promised reward of a big bonus, and I was non-plussed. We had brought out in half-rolled sections about a mile and a half of these pipes, and had rivetted them up in twenty-two feet lengths, each about two feet in diameter, and now it looked as if, for the want of a few venturesome men, we were going to end all in a fiasco.

Just at this juncture an Italian miner, a runaway sailor who had worked in the Italian quarries, turned up. He immediately undertook to pioneer the way, and was the first man to be let down over the cliffs; the Mexicans, with the bonus before their eyes, soon followed, and we were not long before we had a series of holes bored along the lower part of these cliffs, and into these we wedged short pieces of rails, on which the pipe-line rested, and the different lengths were then joined up. My Italian proved a God-send, and was himself as nimble and fearless as a goat. It was a difficult and slow piece of work, but he most successfully bossed the whole job. At last our pipe-line was completed; the different sections had been dipped in a mixture of asphalt and tar to coat them over as a preventive from rust, and all the joints, which were of the Spigot and Faucot type, had been caulked.

Then came the test; was my pipe-line with its numerous joints going to stand the pressure—more than double that of a locomotive boiler? The whole had been rivetted and put together by the ordinary peons of the country, bossed by one mechanic and by D—— and myself, who took turns to help him. The water was turned on, and gradually the gauge at the lower end showed the pipe was rapidly filling, and finally only three to four joints were found to have given, while about a dozen needed some extra caulking, a success which was beyond my expectations. These repairs were soon made, and again the water

turned on. It stood this time ; the valves were opened at the lower end, and the nozzles turned on to a Pelton wheel. Everything went off well, even to the new compressor plant. With only some minor trouble in again going over a few of the joints the whole scheme was a success, much to my relief, and indeed to all the staff's, for all were interested in it, as it had been a bold step to attempt with only crude native labour.

Only one mishap happened, about a fortnight later ; as I was coming up from below the mill I suddenly saw a great volume of smoke, as I thought at first, but what had happened was that my pipe had burst, and a solid column of water was being shot up some 200 ft. or more high into the air, and was falling back in great clouds of fine spray. The cause of this was that near the mill I had inserted a tee-piece, with the intention of taking a branch pipe-line off it at some future date, and over the open end of the tee I had bolted on a half-inch plate of cast iron. Thinking this amply strong enough to resist the pressure I had never calculated its strength, and it was this that had burst ; but beyond a temporary shut-down no harm was done, and a new and stronger cover was soon put in its place. Later on in the season we had two or three days' torrential rains, and at 8 p.m. one night the mill shut down ; no water was coming down the pipe. It looked like a block at its upper, or inlet-end. It was raining in torrents, a pitch dark night, and no easy job to go up the trail to its head.

I called for volunteers from some of the night shift men, and they were quickly forthcoming, D——, the mine captain and myself going with them. Slowly we made our way up the hill, until we came to where the pipe-line crossed a chasm with a twenty-two feet six inches span. The question was should we take the wide détour around it, or straddle across it ? We decided on the latter. When half way across a Mexican behind me asked if he should take my lamp, which was encumbering me in my efforts to straddle on. I recognized his voice. It was the very man whom I had always kept my eye on as the one man I was doubtful about. A push from his little finger would have unbalanced me, and sent me to my death ! I need not say I afterwards took care to see he was helped on to a better berth than the one he then had.

On arriving at the inlet it was found the pipe was blocked with branches, dead wood, and leaves. After a hard task we succeeded in clearing it, but on my return I could not quite divest myself of my suspicions of this man, and took care he was not immediately behind me again. We all got back chilled to the bone with the

cold rain, and had to run a considerable risk both on the trail and in clearing away the *débris* and I could only wonder what made those Mexicans volunteer to accompany us, for no extra pay had been promised them, and they asked for nothing extra ; but arranging for others to take their place that night we let them go home.

The more one sees of humanity, however debased, however bad, there is always at the bottom a good side, no matter whether barbarian, semi-civilized, or civilized ; the difficulty is to get at it. The worst criminal respects the man over him who seeks to be just, and who, though outwardly hard, yet has his welfare at heart, which he knows instinctively, for it is not by talk or argument he is convinced ; perhaps it is by an unconscious kind of hypnotism that passes between the two parties, or it may be that each finds some good or something to be respected in the other. So many times in my life have I momentarily been in the hands of what we would call villains, yet I have had no fear, nor even nervousness about safety. Neither was it by any egoism that I could command them, but by an inexpressible consciousness that they would respond to my demands.

It is true some masters can drive their men and get work out of them—in fact extract it out of them in spite of their resistance,—but very few have I come across who can do so, though I have met such. The man that is sympathetic but firm, and is neither soft nor sentimental makes, in my opinion, the best master. He can lead where others cannot drive. One has, above all, to be just, allowing no favouritism to influence one, and even if mistakes or errors do occur your people know well that they are not made intentionally. I have often and often tried to solve the problem how it is that some managers abroad succeed and others fail in the management of their men. Under the roughest exterior there is, I think, more often a sympathetic vein than under a smooth and well-refined exterior. Take a foreman, one man will use a profundity of curse-words, and be apparently harsh, and yet his men will do anything for him ; he may even knock them about a bit while another may act similarly and be loathed, or another may be indifferent, and let his men do pretty much as they like and still be loathed or looked upon with contempt. What is it then that makes the difference if it be not as I said, that humanity finds out intuitively whether the boss or foreman has at bottom a sympathetic spirit or not ? He may not be popular, but nevertheless he will be respected. At all events, whether I am right or wrong, the study of those who control their workpeople successfully

or unsuccessfully is one that is seldom touched upon from the individual point of view in technical works or magazines, but is one well worth closer attention. I do not for one moment say the solution is as simple as the above would make it out to be; it is a complex one, into which many other factors enter, but the dominating one is probably as described.

Our method of treating our ore was to crush it, and concentrate all we could get out of it in our concentrating mill, then to raise the tailings therefrom to the top of a second mill, where they were stamped still finer to get out what remained in them of the gold, and some little copper. I had one engineer in charge who was a man with a perpetual grievance, and did not get on with the natives. Night after night pieces of babbitt metal used to be thrown into the stamp boxes, which had the effect of destroying the amalgamated copper-plates that were used to catch the gold, and many a night was I up clearing out the boxes, a heavy job in itself. At last he left for home, and from the day he left we had no more trouble. The plates remained clean and bright and everything ran quite smoothly. I do not even suggest for one moment he was the real culprit, he was not; but I give it as an example of how even a really competent engineer is no use if he does not get on with his men. It was evident that someone amongst his crew of Mexicans had been doing this to spite him.

Our gold bars we used to put in one of the concentrate bags, and no one knew but myself and Don José which of the numerous bags contained them. This we did for safety against robbery on the road down. During my stay here an old Western States type of a prospector turned up with three mules and a peon. He stayed with me a couple of days, and I helped to fit him out with a few prospecting tools he was short of. I told him I thought he was unwise in attempting to penetrate these parts alone, as any money he might be carrying would be a great temptation to the kind of Mexican and Indian in this very little known State; in fact, we were the only foreigners working in it, but he would not listen to my advice, and set out in good spirits, nothing daunted. Three days after he left us he was found murdered, stripped save for his shirt, and the curious part about it was that his head, which had been cut off, was never found. The peon and mules disappeared and no trace of them was found, so that appearances pointed to his own peon having murdered him.

About the same time, the Standard Oil Company sent an expedition into this State—quite a large party, who were all armed to the teeth and with an escort of soldiers. These arrived at our

little town nine miles off, where the police lived, and where there was a trail branching off to the town of Pichucalco some forty to fifty miles distant. Hearing they were coming our way I sent the head of the party an invitation to visit us, but he never even had the politeness to reply to my letter and turned off on the Pichucalco trail. One of the party had a habit of riding on in front of the others; two Mexicans held him up, and though he was armed with a revolver and a Remington rifle, they not only relieved him of these, but got away with forty dollars he had about his person and his saddle and bridle; while they bound him hand and foot, and left him tied to a tree overhanging a precipice. When his party came up a few minutes afterwards they found him there. It was a very daring robbery, and very quickly executed.

Several months afterwards—it was on their own confession—I discovered that two of our own miners had committed this outrage. I used to tell these two men that, if I ever met them on the road alone I hoped they would be more polite to me, and that, at all events I should expect it from them. I did not give them away, but sooner or later I knew that the police would hear about it, and that if caught they would pay up a great deal more than they had gained.

I always lived in fear of exceptional floods, because, situated as our camp was in the bed of the valley, and almost level with the main stream running through it, it was in a very dangerous position should any abnormal flood occur. Many a time used I to force my way through the upper beds of these streams, bestrewn with fallen trees and dead wood, to see that no natural dams were forming. Between the steep hill-sides, covered with a dense undergrowth of scrub and trees, I used to come across some lovely little dells and peeps, and deep pools at the foot of small waterfalls; at their sides the most varied assortment of ferns and fern trees was growing. Birds looking something like our own kingfisher were to be seen darting in and out and alighting on branches near; they would look at one as if wondering who it was that came thus penetrating these solitudes, the stillness of which was only broken by the sound of rippling waters and small waterfalls. These birds were so tame that one could gaze on their beautiful plumage as if they were in a glass case, but they were not of the kingfisher species, though very similar in plumage.

Up one of these ravines was a favourite resort for racoons, so unaccustomed to human beings that they would play and gambol about in the branches immediately over my head. Save for the humid heat and stifling air, and the exertion of getting through

thickets of dead trees and branches, and the climbing from rock to rock, these excursions were delightful, and about one's only means of getting away from the monotony of our camp. A few years after I left the mine I heard that such a flood as I had feared did take place, the end of the mill was swept away, and many houses with it, and some twenty to thirty natives lost their lives; but it was caused by the bursting of a water-spout and not by the giving way of a natural-made dam, as I had feared.

In the big river we used to get a little fishing, but to make sure of any sport we had to clamber far up the river bed, as our miners used to dynamite almost every pool near by for fish. It was a source of great annoyance, as it meant that the dynamite was stolen from us for this purpose. It so happened that the Jefe Politico's house near San Cristobal was blown up one night by dynamite, but he and his family fortunately happened to be away that night, or they would all have been killed. A very stringent order was issued forthwith that any man caught with dynamite upon him outside our camp would be subject to the most terrible punishments. From that time we heard of no more dynamiting of fish.

In connection with our mill we had introduced a new kind of concentrating table—"Evan's Tables"—and had sent home for a little Welshman who understood them. I had given Don José instructions that as he probably would not be used to riding to bring him up by easy stages; but Don José paid no attention to my instructions, and had brought him through in a three long days' ride. Coming out of the mine one night I was informed that the new man had arrived, and was in the store. Going in there I saw an individual curled up on the counter; after various contortions he managed to let himself down on to his feet. The poor little chap could hardly stand, so stiff and saddle-sore was he.

Think of anyone never having ridden a horse in his life suddenly put on one, and made to ride from daylight till dark, especially as a good part of the ride was through the "Tierras Calientes," with their swarms of mosquitoes! His face proved how badly they had bitten him. I admired the man's pluck in sticking it out, but he was ill, and with a high temperature on him. I had him put to bed, where he remained for several days.

I was really angry with Don José, but having been used to the saddle all his life his idea was that the sooner a man was taught to ride the better, and that the more he rode the sooner he would learn. My poor little Welshman, after he recovered, had a life of it for many months, though I was in ignorance of it. The

Cornishmen, a good set of men in themselves, took a dislike to him, and never once did they let him have a dry bed, for systematically every night they poured a pitcher of water over it, having planned to run him out of camp. At last it culminated in their putting his " Sunday go to Meeting " clothes in a bucket of tar, and pasting over his door a notice to clear out, with a skull and bones drawn beneath it. Only then did I hear of this treatment of him, as he had to come and tell me. I put a stop to it by warning the miners that if there was any more of it I would give them all notice to leave the mine there and then, even if I had to close it down temporarily for want of them. I heard no more, and he was left in peace. They had, for some reason, made a dead set against him. He was always a willing and a ready worker but I had to let him go before his contract was up, as I could not enforce their being on good terms with him, and I recognized that the life of an ostracized man in this place was an unbearable one. However, he had taught one or two Mexicans the use of the tables, and so he was not missed. Anyway, the man had some grit in him to have stayed as long as he did. As to the miners themselves, they were, notwithstanding, excellent men, and like all " cousin jacks " (as they are called) fond of singing. So we used at times to get some very good songs out of them.

Our ore was an exceptional one, the gangue being Wollastonite, and its needle-shaped spicules used to pierce our hands, and set up festering sores until we learned how to handle it. It was, too, as sharp as a knife, and our boot-bills were heavy, for boots soon got cut to pieces by it. As the months rolled by little episodes such as I have recounted were our only diversions, if such they may be called. Occasionally an official from up-country would call in on us, and want to be shown through the mine and round the mill, and what interested visitors most was to see one of the nozzles of our pipe-line allowed free play, when it would act as a great hydraulic jet if directed against the river bank, and would send the gravel and stones flying as if they had been struck by a continuous stream of cannon balls impinging upon them, so great was the force of the water issuing therefrom.

A favourite amusement was to give one of our visitors a heavy bar of iron, and to tell him to strike the jet of water with it, the effect of this was as if striking a bar of iron itself, and away would go the bar clean out of his hands. An officer, with his sword, thought it would be an easy matter to cut the jet in two, but he might just as well have tried to cut a rod of steel in two.



The proprietor of the land around us was about our only constant visitor ; he was what was called a " pinto," or painted. This was a very common disease amongst our Mexicans, and is a quiescent form of leprosy, but it has the effect of causing the flesh to assume the most extraordinary hues, sometimes blue, green or yellow, and the persons so afflicted have a most unpleasant appearance. This particular friend of ours was always desirous of shaking hands with me—a thing I used to scheme to avoid without giving offence, for I was so afraid of possible contagion.

The store was always a great place of interest, and we carried on quite a large business there, not only with our own people, but with the up-country folk. In hats, or " Sombreros," alone we did quite an extensive business. The first article of dress is the sombrero ; the poorest peon often may be seen wearing a most expensive one. Many thought little of giving as much as \$50 to \$100 for one, that is £5 to £10. These were usually of felt or straw, with wide brims and high conical crowns trimmed with massive gold or silver braid and ornamented with " Chapetas," or small metal badges made out of gold or silver. We also did a good trade in " Rebozos " (shawls or sashes) worn by the women. Boots, again, were in great demand, for the native, soon after coming to the mine, would give up his " Huaraches " (sandals) for them, which perhaps was to be accounted for by the sharpness of the Wollastonite about the place. Tobacco was very cheap ; every peon smoked the native cigars or " Poros," and would always hand me one if I was without one. The native women were very expert in making them, armed only with a pair of scissors and a basket in which to place them. Little tots of children too were almost as expert in making them as their mothers. Usually the woman finished the outside wrapper by picking up her skirt and rolling the cigar on the lower part of her thigh. 25 cents, or 6d. per hundred was the price paid for their manufacture, or 10 cents was the price for a handful (as many as a man could grasp and pick up with one hand out of the basket). Although green, they were by no means a poor smoke, and for the price the cheapest I ever came across. A very good tobacco was grown in a district away up in the hills called Huimangilla. An old Indian, to whom I used to pay a dollar, or 2s., for the journey, and another for the tobacco, would bring me down for this a large bundle of it ; the cigar made from it had a flavour much nearer to that of a Havana than the usual Mexican one, the latter being somewhat harsh or rough in flavour until one is accustomed to it. Both the men and women smoked cigarettes as well as cigars. It was

no uncommon thing to see a woman, with a baby of about twelve to eighteen months old slung on her back, twist the little bundle round under her arm and hold a cigarette to its mouth to suck.

At the end of my agreement with the Company I decided not to renew it, as it was not a place to which I cared to bring my wife, and I was not therefore prepared for another long period of what was virtually imprisonment in the bottom of a tea-cup, so shut in were we. Notwithstanding, when the time came to say good-bye it was not without regret, for in the midst of such strange acquaintances there were not a few in whom I was deeply interested. Again, I was sorry to leave behind the members of my staff with whom I had been in close and daily intercourse. The night before I left there was a dance, or "baile," in our little Plaza, at which I took the opportunity of wishing all goodbye.

## CHAPTER VII.

### TO MEXICO CITY AND HOME.

EARLY next morning I was at last on my way home. As we swung out of our gorge on to the main trail I felt like a man who could once more breathe freely ; all responsibility was gone and with it a heavy load off my shoulders, for it had been no light task to keep order after I had once gained it. But I left with the pleasant knowledge that it was a far different camp from the one I had found—in fact quite a respectable one.

As I rode along that narrow trail, which afforded such delightful peeps of the river scenery, I turned over in my mind whether or not I should pay a visit to Palenque, which I had always set my mind on doing. It so happened that there was an important legal matter to fix up in Mexico City, and a delay might prove detrimental to the Company's interests, though there was nothing binding on me to see to it ; I wavered between loyalty to the Company and an almost irresistible impulse to visit that place. I had made up my mind previously to thrash this matter out on the road down, a decision had to be come to, and never in my life was I more pulled to go my own way. I was losing the chance of a lifetime, but I decided to give it up, and even to this day I have not given up all thoughts of a visit to it. However, I was rewarded, for in Mexico I caught the lawyer, who was just leaving for a long absence, so I did the right thing.

Speaking of legal matters, an incident occurred when I was at the mine which threw some light on the character of President Porfirio Diaz. A new law had been promulgated in Mexico that no concentrates were to be allowed to be exported unless the State-Assayer had sampled and assayed them. For some three months or more our concentrates had been held up by the Customs at Frontera, for as the State of Chiapas had no State-Assayer we could not get the Assay certificate which the Custom House officials demanded from us. The two most prominent lawyers in Mexico City gave it as their opinion that the Custom House authorities were acting correctly. In desperation I wrote a personal letter to the President, very briefly putting our case before him, and posted it, but never thought that it was likely to reach him. Soon afterwards I received a telegram from His Excellency : " Tell your lawyers that if there is no State-Assayer

there is no law to be broken." At the same time he must have sent a telegram to the Customs people to release our concentrates. The revelation that a man in his position had such a grasp on the country that a little out-of-the-way mine could obtain his immediate and personal interference shed a flood of light on the close way in which he watched his country's welfare. Had he only resigned the Presidency three or four years previous to his fall—for he was then getting too old to keep that close grip he had always kept on his State Governors—he would have gone down in history, I have little doubt, as one of the world's great rulers.

For many years I held Mexican Bonds, the only foreign bonds I think at that time that remained year after year above par. The day I heard Porfirio Diaz had fallen I sold mine out, and they were still above par, for few, if any, realized what his *régime* had been. A lawyer, financier and scientist, sportsman and soldier—all these qualifications were combined in the one man, and were added to a Cromwellian spirit which was ruthless to those who attempted rebellion, but kind of heart to all those who were loyal. He knew the Mexican so well that his Government has been the only one suited to the country, as events have since proved. From bankruptcy he had brought the country to a financially flourishing state; from a land where none were safe to travel save in large armed parties—so overrun was it with bandits—to one of peace and safety. On the principle of "set a thief to catch a thief" he gave the bandits the option, whenever caught, of being shot or joining the "Rurales," a police force composed almost entirely of these people, and organized much on the lines of the Irish constabulary, and a very fine body of men they were. Such was Diaz, a ruler of nearly forty years' standing. Since his fall Mexico has lapsed back to its original state and still remains so—and is likely to continue to remain.

At Teapa I bade farewell to Don José and his family; he was an excellent man, especially, in escorting the money up and the bullion down.

At San Juan Bautista our agent feted me before leaving. At Frontera I found a local steamer leaving for Vera Cruz; going on deck I found the saloon (which was on deck) with a plain deal table running throughout its length and benches along it, while open berths ran on either side of it, with no curtains, and almost flush with the benches. A placard at one end was nailed up, having the following notice in large letters printed upon it, "Ladies and gentlemen are requested not to take off their chemises": the kind of fellow passengers that came on board can best be imagined,

and we left Frontera with a good number of them. Off the bar, a little outside, we missed its exit, and went broadside on to it with the seas sweeping over us. All the passengers and crew crowded on to the bridge. The captain, a Mexican, said he thought we would go to pieces, at which the women screamed, and became frantic with fear. After a tremendous pounding we were at last washed right across it, and save for the loss of a boat and some deck cargo we appeared not to have suffered. The saloon was intact, but drowned out.

Getting into a berth I stayed there for two days, and a terrible two days it was, for we had run into a Norther, one of those gales for which the gulf of Mexico is noted. At last I heard the cry of "lights ahead," and we all thought they were those of Vera Cruz; instead they were those of Frontera, for we had turned and run back for this port without any of us knowing it. This time we hit the entrance all right, and once again I found myself on shore, and there we stayed for three days until the gale had abated. Leaving Frontera once more we made Vera Cruz without further mishap, and the same day we arrived there I left by train for Orizaba.

After a run of about thirty miles across the plain the ascent gradually began; at about fifty miles it was a heavy grade, and in about another thirty miles the town of Orizaba was reached, standing at an elevation of about 4,000 feet above sea level. Here I stayed a couple of days, visiting some of its large mills which were engaged in the manufacture of sacks, and I contracted with the owners for a large supply of them. I was surprised to find such large and up-to-date mills, fitted up with the latest American improvements, employing hundreds of hands and, as in our own manufactories, the women and men going to work at the sound of the steam whistle as regularly as clockwork. Orizaba is interesting not only for its snow-clad peak standing over 17,200 feet high, but also as being near the site of Cerro del Borrego, at the base of which the French, under Bazaine, defeated the Mexicans in the summer of 1862.

From Orizaba I travelled some 124 miles to Puebla, obtaining some magnificent views of Orizaba, Mexico's highest peak. Seven miles from this city is that of Cholula, where is found the great Pyramid of Mexico, the object of my visit. A road cut up and around it leading to its summit shows the pile to have been constructed of layers of sun-dried brick and clay. It stands above 175 feet high, and covers at its base the immense area of nearly 400,000 square yards. At the summit the area is only about

twenty-two square yards, and on this in the time of Hernando Cortes was the Mexican temple on which stood the great sacrificial stone now removed to Mexico city. On this stone the priests laid their victims, and then with a large stone knife they opened them up, and, plunging their hands into the wounds, tore out their hearts. There stands to-day in its place a Roman Catholic chapel. From here a fine view is obtained of the country round. On my way down I picked out pieces of pottery (which were very plentiful) from the side of the Pyramid.

In the small town they show you an adobe house, in which Hernando Cortes is stated to have lived, but it is an adobe (mud-brick) house and one that could not have stood the elements for this length of time, unfortunately for the authenticity of this legend !

There are in Puebla several interesting places worth a visit, especially the Cathedral, where some very fine onyx work is to be seen. I think it was here, too, that I saw the massive doors of one of its churches made entirely of silver ; the amount of silver-work inside was equally striking. From Puebla the peaks of Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl are visible, and both are very majestic volcanic mountains.

Leaving Puebla, after a ride of about 112 miles, I arrived in Mexico City. Here I spent a few days, and thoroughly enjoyed them. The view from the city with the volcanic peaks in the distance is very fine. There were so many places of interest to visit that I shall not attempt to describe them, as there are so many books that have been written on this most interesting city which are well worth reading. I will only say the Cathedral was especially interesting ; the great Calendar Stone is found here, and was at the time of my visit the only key to Mexican hieroglyphics, as on it the signs of the Zodiac are clearly represented. The museum, too, with its many idols, paintings and pre-historic antiquities, is of absorbing interest. Here is the " Piedra de los Sacrificios," or the Sacrificial Stone—just referred to as having been removed from the Pyramid of Cholula. Historians state that over 50,000 victims were slaughtered upon this massive stone. The cathedrals at Puebla and here are very fine buildings of the Spanish Renaissance style.

I also paid a trip to Chapultepec, the palace of the ill-fated Emperor Maximilian. The fine avenue of trees at its base, and the superb view from its summit, are two most marked features of this place. I was disappointed in the palace itself, save for its site ; in my estimation it is a very mediocre building. The

Mining School possesses a very fine mineral collection in a building which cost over a million pounds sterling, and to the mining man this collection is of especial interest. The whole city is full of interest, from the scenic, historical, architectural and racial sides, and well worth a special visit to anyone visiting the States. Mexico is all so utterly different from anything in that continent or our own that it creates much the same impression on the traveller as when he arrives for the first time in the Far East. It is to him in fact a "new world."

From Mexico City I visited Querritaro. It was here, on the Cerro de las Campanas, that Maximilian was shot in 1867 with his two generals. After a brief stay I left for Atlanta, Georgia, U.S., where an exhibition of Southern States productions was being held; for this reason I had planned to stay here, and visit the exhibition. I arrived very late at night, and walked to my hotel. In the morning I awoke to hear a very curious hum passing and re-passing my window. As I looked out from my bed I could see what looked like a long fishing-rod passing and re-passing, and I could not imagine what it could be. On getting up and going to the window I saw it was the conducting rod of the electric trams, the first I had seen, now so common to us all.

The exhibition proved to be one well worth visiting. As I wandered through its well-laid out grounds I recognized the tomtoms and weird, plaintive song of the Fantis in the distance. On asking a visitor if he had seen these people he said, "I reckon I have, some niggers dressed up and said to have come from West Africa, but Southern niggers only." Finding my way between the buildings I came on the musicians, and as I approached them I, too, thought they must be just dressed-up darkies of the South, which I afterwards discovered was generally believed to be the case. But they proved to be the real article, and "Da-se oula," I heard from them again and again, a Fanti expression meaning "thank you my master, and welcome." As I stood and conversed with a few who could speak English, interlarding my sentences with a few words of Fanti I remembered, it took me all back again to my old West African days. Why they had brought these natives from so great a distance I could not find out, but anyway they proved a failure, for no one believed them to be other than I have just described. To myself it was a pleasure; it was like meeting old friends and befriending them, for none took any interest in them.

I had a curious experience in one of the many side-shows, and one that I have never come across in England—one I feel sure

that would "take" immensely if introduced here. Entering a large kind of hall filled with chairs I took a seat on one of them, and waited for the show to commence, having no idea what it might prove to be. In front of me I noticed that the whole wall seemed to be one great mirror. Then, as a band struck up, my chair began to move and to turn gradually over, and I found myself apparently hanging head downwards gripping its seat with my hands. Finally we came down and resumed our original sittings. As a matter of fact I had not moved from my seat, the mirror had revolved on which we had been told to keep our eyes. The sensation was as if we were ourselves moving. I repeated the experience, and though I then knew it was an optical delusion I found myself again grasping my chair tightly as I apparently hung head downwards.

After spending a couple of days here I continued my journey homeward by way of Niagara, Montreal and New York. The view of the Falls was as fascinating and grand as on my previous visits, and nothing abated by this, my third one. At last, after crossing the "pond," I arrived after my long absence, at Liverpool, where I was met by my wife and little daughter, the latter grown out of all recollection from a baby into girlhood.

But my homecoming was not altogether one of unalloyed pleasure, for I found two of my Directors wanted me to proceed almost directly to New Zealand; but the mining engineer is like a soldier or a sailor—he has to pack up his traps and say good-bye to loved ones at a moment's notice, and when requested to do so. After a very short visit home I was off again to New Zealand. But as I went over much the same ground as before on my previous visit I will not refer to it, except to say that I travelled *via* Australia, and by the overland route from Adelaide *via* Melbourne to Sydney, and from there, after a rough passage, I reached Auckland.

After a few months, having completed my task, I was once more on my way home again. In New Zealand I developed almost acute dyspepsia, and on the voyage home it got worse, until I could digest little, if any, food. At home, the doctors did me no good, but one day, meeting an old General, a friend of my father-in-law, he said, "Try the Salisbury treatment." He had been a dyspeptic himself for ten years, and mostly confined to his house, when, hearing of this treatment and adopting it, he had been quite cured by it. Though seventy years of age he was at every dance, and one of the most active men in our town. I tried the treatment (a heroic one, for it is on an intensely insipid diet) and in six weeks



I was practically well, and by three months was quite so. It subsequently turned out that what I had been suffering from was the effects of lime, for in Mexico the women used to wash off the outer husks of the maize with lime, and the coats of my inside evidently had become burned by it. From that day to this I have had no return of it, and have to thank the Salisbury treatment for so quickly setting right what had been wrong with me.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SWAZILAND, SOUTH AFRICA.

WITH the exception of an interval of two years, again in South Africa, I was now almost continuously in the Far East until in 1903, when I gave up the managership of mines and started as a consulting mining engineer in London, and in connection therewith made many expeditions to South Africa, the States, Canada, Mexico, Malay States, Dutch East and British North Borneo, Tonkin, Siam, Yunan. I also made several expeditions to Russia, where I have travelled extensively, and visited many mines in the Transbaikal provinces, Central Siberia, and Turkestan, including a very short visit to Tashkend. Before describing incidents in our life in the East I will first take that of our life in South Africa, so that the former may be brought into a connected series of incidents of Eastern life. I say "our," for after several years at home my wife was once again able to join me in my life abroad. In fact I left the East, and went to South Africa with the sole object of her accompanying me there, and we remained there until the outbreak of the Boer War, when we returned home; but after a very brief visit we left again for the East, where we remained for the following three years.

It was in the Summer of 1897 that we left England—bound for Swaziland, South Africa—my wife and self, accompanied by our son (just over seven years of age) leaving our small daughter with her grandmother. At Cape Town we spent a delightful day with two old friends of my wife's childhood days, both of whom had then been in the service of her Aunt, with whom she used to spend a good deal of time. So they had much to talk about, and took us for a long drive through and around Cape Town and its suburbs. Returning by way of Sea Point we again went on board our steamer, and sailed for Port Elizabeth, where we met a sister of mine who happened to be staying there, and spent a couple of happy days with her. Then we went on to Johannesburg, staying a few days there before going on towards our destination by train to Barberton.

The whole railway journey from Port Elizabeth is through the monotonous scenery of the Veldt, but possesses a peculiar charm of its own until Waterfall Boven is reached. Here, the long descent to the Low Country begins, ending at Waterfall Onder,

when new forms of the Vegetable Kingdom make their appearance, subtropical and quite different in character from that of the high Veldt. A marked feature of the landscape in particular was the lichen covering many of the bluffs passed *en route*, with tints of browns, yellows and reds which were strikingly beautiful. At Barberton we stayed a few days; though very hot and humid it is a fascinating little town, nestling at the base of the Abbott's Hill, which towers above it. At the Granville Hotel the proprietress—a well-known character—took a motherly interest in us, and made us thoroughly comfortable.

A young Boer staying there was a great source of amusement to us all, for he was always up to some fun or practical joke. He was a good pianist, and in the evenings we often gathered round to hear him play. On one of these occasions we heard the most indescribable sounds issuing from the piano; no one knew what had happened, but the old landlady, rushing up to the piano, threw open its top, and pulled out from it her favourite cat. She had recognized its yawns from amidst the sounds of discordant notes, which none of us had divined. It was the player who had popped the creature into the piano. He and the old lady had a tussle of very wordy arguments; she threatened to turn him out of the hotel, but our friend was so comical in his witty replies that it ended in her almost going off into hysterics. I remember his finally resuming his seat at the piano, and announcing that he would describe his interview with the bank manager with whom he had a big overdraft. He musically described his approach to the bank, his knock at the manager's door, his welcome, the heated argument, and his withdrawal. All was so well played that we could easily imagine the whole scene.

Before setting out for Swaziland I visited some of the mines around, amongst them the well-known "Sheba," which had then seen its palmiest days. In Barberton we met the W——'s, with whom we struck up a friendship that has continued to this day. The old days of Barberton have long since gone by. The mines around us, and those of Pilgrim's Rest, were centres of great activity until Johannesburg, the greatest gold mining camp in the world, arose and overshadowed their activities completely. Still, many of the old pioneers have stuck to the little town, continuing to live on in hopes of better days coming again, among them my friends the W——'s.

From here we sent our heavy baggage down the line to Komatie Poort, there to be sent up on to our mines in an ox-waggon—a five to six days' journey, or, as the Boers say, "trek." As there

was a horse-trail from here across the mountainous country into Swaziland we prepared to ride out. A fairly stiff day's ride it was too, so hilly and rocky are the twenty-eight miles intervening between here and the Pigg's Peak mines, which were our objective. On the trail out there was only one house, known as Pigg's House. The father of the present owner was one of Swaziland's earliest pioneers, and from him the mines derived their name. It was on a bright, sunny morning when we set forth for this last stage of our journey, each mounted on a horse, and escorted by the doctor from the mine, who had come in to guide us out, and accompanied by a few natives on foot carrying our smaller baggage. Up the long Abbott's Hill we climbed for about two to two and a half hours, and at the top we halted to view a panorama of mountain, hill, dale and plain. That on the Swazie side is an especially fine one, with the Lomatie stream winding through its valley at the base of this high range of hills.

It was along this range that General French subsequently came from Carolina, and so skilfully held up the main body of Boers, while he, with a part of his troops, made his way along their flanks unobserved, and got between them and Barberton, making his great capture of locomotives, cars, and other booty, and dislodging Kruger from his last stronghold, the then seat of Government, by his capture of the town. It was a magnificent and well executed strategical feat; one worthy of the dash of a cavalry officer, for the risk he took must have been great. Knowing those hills as I subsequently had cause to know them, it was always a marvel to me how he was able to skid his artillery down and along their precipitous sides, or even to bring horses through and to dare the risk, for had he been discovered in this manœuvre he would have been compelled to surrender.

On our ride out the trail was often so rough we had to dismount and lead our horses. At the half-way house we spent the night, and made the acquaintance of Pigg and his wife, with whom a little before the outbreak of the war we took a ten days' hunting trip into the low country after blue "Wilderbest." Next day, continuing our journey, before coming to what is known as the Devil's Bridge, we looked down into one of those heavily timbered kloofs, well hidden away, which came upon us as a surprise as we were gazing on the desolate looking hills around us, and some hundreds of feet below where we stood we sighted a large troop of baboons. Crossing the bridge, a very narrow ridge that forms a connecting link between two mountain peaks, and down which a fall on either side would have sent us to our deaths, we entered Swaziland.

This country was taken under our protection, and our Government swore to its people that the rivers would run uphill before it would again be handed back to the Boers; yet a few years afterwards we entered into a treaty with the Boer Government, and handed it over to them as a Protectorate. It was governed at the time of our entry into the country by a Boer Commissioner, a judge, and a few minor officials, backed up by a mounted police force, whose main camp was at Bremersdorp, the capital, about two to three days' distant from the Peak. This Court was the supreme one in the country, and from its authority there was no appeal to any Transvaal Court; consequently the form of Government, though under a republican one, was that of an autocratic one.

Swaziland is very hilly, even mountainous, and is often called the Switzerland of the Transvaal. As we rode along, soon after leaving the bridge, we passed some curious looking palm trees, standing alone, and notwithstanding the cold winds and even frosts which at this altitude are not uncommon in winter, they appeared to be strong enough trees, and as if placed there by some freak of nature as frontier sentinels or outposts. I doubt if there are others of their species anywhere in the country at the same altitude; at all events I never remember coming across any again in my subsequent journeys in these parts. A few miles further on we came in sight of the Peak, a prominent one in this district, but it has since been blasted away, as it formed the crest of the "gold shoot" known as Pigg's Peak mine, that has been worked for many years and is still being worked. It has had a career which has been a veritable "Will o' the Wisp," one moment flaring up with a brilliant outlook and then suddenly extinguished by the faulting or breaking-off of the ore body. It is a mine of peculiar geological interest, and one of exceptional difficulty in its ramifications and its intricacies.

On the far side of the Peak, nestling under a grove of wattle trees, we came on our home. It was in the style of a narrow, long bungalow, the rooms opening all out on to a verandah running the length of it. Immediately at the back was a small shed, or the kitchen quarters. Away back of it again was the "Peak," and hidden beneath it the mine. In front we had a lovely view of the valley below and the hills beyond. Near by was the mill, connected by a high trestle bridge with the tram road running into the mine. Eight and a half miles away was the power station, where was generated the electric current that supplied the mine and the mill with power. A hundred feet below us and a quarter

of a mile away was the country store, having a small hotel and stables attached to it.

Here lived Carter, one of the three first pioneers in Swaziland, Pigg (before referred to) being one of the three, while G. Hutchinson, who kept a trading store a few miles off, formed the third. Carter was well-known to have gone down at one time to Delagoa Bay with about four pals, to have captured its fort, turning out some fifty Portuguese troops with their officers, and to have held it for two days with the Union Jack flying. Many a yarn did this old pioneer spin, but we seldom saw him, for in his old age he had become much of a recluse. The outgoing manager, then only married a few days, was simply acting as *locum tenens* pending my arrival. Thus another friend was made whom I often see now. Only a day or two ago I congratulated him on his escape from a torpedoed ship on which I had lost a cousin.

He, with his bride, remained a few days to hand things over to us, and we were sorry to say good-bye to them, although our acquaintance was so short. He was a good musician, and of an evening we much enjoined his playing—the piano unfortunately did not do him justice.

The mine, much to my disappointment, had not the tonnage opened as reported by the former resident manager; the mill—a very old one—was, too, in a terrible state of repair, and after I had made quite sure of the state of things I cabled home my resignation. I discovered that the Company had no funds, and was heavily in debt, and altogether I regretted much that I had left the East. However, we effected a compromise, and I finally agreed to stay on and see if I could work an uphill job; to me the difficulty was the incentive. The cost of mining and milling was then about twenty-five shillings a ton, but I felt if I could succeed in bringing down this cost there might be some hope for the mine. Believing I could do so I put my back into it because, if this proved possible, the lower grade, *i.e.*, poorer ore, could be made to pay.

As the Company was heavily in debt to the Barberton storekeepers, they began to dun me for payment. When I rode into town I collected all the Company's creditors, and gave them the choice of two things—either for them to foreclose on the mine, which meant shutting it down, or to give me time to repay them. I told them quite frankly that I only *thought* I should be able to do so, that it would take several months in any case before I should be in a position to make a commencement, and that, meantime, I wanted further credit from them. To my surprise

they all agreed, and I went back to the mine with a load off my shoulders.

The mine boys were accustomed, as on the Randt, to drill a certain length of hole, and then to leave off work and go home when that task was completed. To make a success I had gradually to change this, and eventually kept all at work full time; but before doing so I re-arranged their quarters. The three tribes employed on the works were mainly S'hangans, Zulus and Swazies, with a few Basuto boys in addition. To each tribe I gave a separate encampment and a small piece of ground to grow mealies on. I gave them, too, a slight increase of mealie allowance above that of the Randt, and killed a beast for them now and again, and encouraged those not at work to dance and to hunt on Sundays. In this my white staff gave me every help and assistance. No one's pay, black or white, was cut, but rather increased, and gradually I had all working full time, and well at that. A few went off, but most remained, and before many months had passed boys came to the mine of their own accord looking for work. Previously, twenty shillings a head had been given to "runners" for boys, thereafter I never had to pay a cent for any, for as we had obtained a good name for our treatment of them they came of their own accord. No boy was fined or punished for trivialities, but when we caught a rascal, or one deliberately defiant, I made an example of him.

Gradually my costs came down to 9s. 11d. per ton, everything included, a record for a mine working in South Africa at that time. All our creditors were paid off, for I had given my word that not an ounce of gold should be sent home until this had been done. Thus we got interested in our work, and instead of a loss we had a profit. Having now given a slight outline of the nature of what had brought me and kept me in Swaziland, I will go on to relate a few of our experiences.

Settling down we made ourselves as comfortable in our new quarters as possible. The question uppermost in my wife's mind was the cuisine. Cherry, the cook, was a S'hangan. The housemaid was a Swazie boy. The former was quite a good cook, but his kitchen was inexpressibly dirty, though he himself personally clean and respectably dressed; but the housemaid's clothing consisted of an old toilet cover round his loins, a silk blouse that evidently belonged to his former mistress, and her hat trimmed with feathers; while the general maid of all work—woodcutter, and water-carrier amidst other duties—was a Zulu, nicknamed "Moses," who was garbed almost in nature's attire. This was

an entirely new experience for my wife. The kitchen was cleaned up, the tables freshly planed, and all looked very nice, and the boys rigged up from the store in respectable apparel, but alas! my wife, on going to the kitchen one morning, found two of the boys busy cleaning each other's woolly heads, and a third using one of the culinary dishes to wash his feet in, while in one of the big saucepans was a loin-cloth awaiting a wash-up!

From that day my wife started to do the cooking herself, and only used the boys under her own superintendence. Of cooking she had absolutely no experience, but it was not long before she turned out a really expert chef. The bread we obtained from the store; then it was discovered that the baker was suffering from cancer, and no one could be found to take his place, so bread had to be made at home. Such were our domestic troubles, but my wife made light of them, and I really think she enjoyed her new arrangements; and as the native boys—who usually dislike any woman over them—liked her, we got on splendidly.

Our main recreation used to be a ride, with an occasional visit to the Falls where our power station was situated. An unhealthy place it was, but a very charming spot, with its waterfall immediately above, and lovely fern-covered rocks beneath. Here we used to visit our employees in charge and picnic out. On Saturday evenings we used to have a sing-song or theatricals in a Club we got up amongst our staff, and some very amusing evenings were thus passed.

Soon after our arrival I was talking to my wife just inside one of the rooms, while my small boy was playing on the verandah, when I heard him call out, "Father, if you don't come I shall be killed." Thinking he was playing we took no notice, when I heard a little voice again call out, "Father, I shall certainly be killed if you don't come." Stepping out on to the verandah, there near the boy was a large black "Momba," the most poisonous snake in South Africa, whose bite is always fatal. On hearing my footsteps it slid into a drain-pipe near by. On asking the boy why he did not run away, the little chap said, "Why, then the snake might have got into the house and killed you and mother if I did not watch him to see where he would go." Two Zulus with their assegais came up just then, and proceeded, with a third, to get the snake out of its hiding-place. These two stood with their assegais poised over the mouth of the drain-pipe, while the third one got a long pole and proceeded to push it down the drain; out came the Momba, and in a flash both assegais pinned it to the ground, while the third, snapping off a length from the pole, quickly battered in its head.



We had advertised in the Johannesburg papers for a governess, and out of the replies we selected a lady with good references. This lady in due course arrived and proved most companionable to my wife, and taught the little boy. She proved to be highly accomplished and well-read, she had travelled, and was interesting. But there was a mystery about her ; why should she, who was so well-educated, undertake the training of this small boy when she was much better fitted to educate bigger children ? And why, too, should she shut herself away in this out of the way place ? As time went on the mystery began to resolve itself ; I kept my counsel to myself and said nothing, but it became plain she was in constant and secret correspondence with the Boer Administrator of Swaziland at Bremersdorp, and with the Frie-Director in charge of the police camp a few miles away from us, where there were seventy mounted police. From her I obtained a good deal of information of what was going on in the country, as the sequel will show.

## CHAPTER IX.

### NATIVE RIOT.

OUR first Christmas day was an eventful one. With the exception of the accountant all the staff had gone off hunting. My wife was busy making preparations for the Christmas dinner we were giving to the heads of my staff that evening. The day before we had horse-racing, shooting, and sports for the natives, in which all had taken a lively part, and all had passed off peacefully.

Noticing the S'hangans coming down the hill from their kraals above us all dressed up in their war-paint, with assegais and knobkerries, singing and stamping the ground in rhythm as they marched in battle array, I sallied out with only a shambock (a rhinoceros whip) in my hand. I saw Swazies in similar array advancing up the hill. I slipped back and got my revolver, and meeting the accountant arranged with him to endeavour to stop the S'hangan advance while I did similarly with the Swazies. Meantime they had both deployed into two lines, the back line evidently a line of support for the front one, as it kept well behind it. Racing down the hill I met them, and ordered them to stop, but though it checked their speed they slowly continued to advance. Then I slashed their leader with my whip, driving him back, and ran along their line slashing with all my strength any who were ahead of the others. Two bolted out into the open, and I fired my revolver at them, at which they came back. The accountant acted similarly against the S'hangans, and we brought all to a dead halt.

While a parley was going on with the leaders on both sides, some of them had gone back and gathered up old empty bottles, and in the midst of our parley a fusilade of these began. How in so short a time they had gathered so many was a surprise, for they simply rained these on each other. Fortunately they threw them high up into the air, which made it easy to dodge them. Eventually we got each troop to withdraw, and agree to let their leaders state their respective cases to me. A few boys managed to break away on the extreme end of my line, and, meeting a few S'hangans, had a short fight; of those a few got some minor wounds, and only one boy was seriously injured by a battleaxe blow on his chest. Not a few had contusions and cuts from the bottles. After two hours of intense anxiety as to whether it would not end in a pitched

battle—for all were fully armed—we settled their dispute, apparently to the satisfaction of both sides.

The wound in the boy's chest was a bad one, and I failed to stop the flow of blood. Later on the Doctor came in and took him in hand, but he too had great difficulty before he succeeded. At night we had two boys to watch the injured Kaffir, with strict injunctions to see he was kept quiet on his back, for the doctor declared if the wound broke out again it would probably be fatal. Next morning this boy had disappeared, having been carried off by his companions, as they did not believe in the white man's doctor; but a few weeks afterwards he came back to work quite cured. One of the boys, whose leg had been cut by glass, developed gangrene. The doctor decided to amputate, but the boys carried him off. He, too, turned up to work after a few weeks, quite cured. From him I learnt that they took him to a kraal, where the native medicine-man had taken him, and had buried his leg in the ground, where he had been a fixture, until on uncovering it, the leg was found to have healed. Our doctor told me that in his opinion the leg was past saving; whether by burying it, as was said to have been the case, or by other means, they had at all events effected a cure, while we, with all our medical knowledge, could not do so save by amputation. It is wonderful what the native will stand in the way of surgical operations, in many cases without an anæsthetic, but they seem to have no stamina to meet disease, for they quickly succumb to it. Measles is very fatal to all natives.

We had an outbreak of small-pox, and one Sunday afternoon a patient escaped. I was after him in the midsummer heat, but he always eluded me every time I came up to him! Eventually I drove him back to the hospital kraal, where he died shortly afterwards, but he was going quite strongly up to the time he entered it, and that after about a two hours' chase. If I had died after my exertion it would not have been surprising, for I am sure I showed more sighs of exhaustion than he did!

Returning to our Christmas day. When the white employees came back late in the afternoon we started on a search in the native kraals for their assegais. Skilfully hidden away in the thatch we collected piles and piles of them. These I had stacked away in my house, but with a promise to give them back in three months' time if in the meantime they gave no further trouble. At the end of three months they were all brought out, and laid down in stacks in a row and the boys were told to file along and pick out their own weapons. Each boy knew at a glance his own particular assegai, and not so much as a question arose between any two

of them as to the ownership. Not one boy, therefore, had tried to "pinch" one not belonging to him, and still more wonderful was it that each knew his own. In the Transvaal no natives are allowed to carry assegais, knob-kerries or battle-axes, but in Swaziland neither the Boer nor our own Government had ever been strong enough to force upon them this measure of precaution.

The mine boys on Saturdays were let off about 2 p.m., and soon afterwards we used to see them dressed up in plumes and all sorts of fantastic ornaments. One fashion which prevailed for some time was a belt, on which were strung tin mugs, and on another long iron spoons. A strange sight it used to be to see two or three hundred of these boys, with assegais and knob-kerries in their hands, go off down the hill at a prancing pace, jingling these ornaments as they went, and shouting their cries as they raced along, all in perfect order, and all intent on reaching some native village, there to drink the native beer. Their fashions in beads, too, were always changing, and very prettily worked girdles and aprons did they make. I have quite a collection of these which my wife obtained from the women. I remember once, in our rambles, we met a native woman who had an especially pretty one that my wife coveted—the woman's only covering—but in some way she induced her to part with it for some trinkets she had with her, when the woman quickly made a grass covering, and went away perfectly happy.

The boys were always a source of amusement to her, save in the kitchen. Their queer way of decorating themselves, and their originality about it, were quite marvellous, though often ludicrous. Once, a sugar sack was broken when unloading it from a waggon, and its contents poured on the ground. In a moment, as if all were seized with a brain-wave, every boy was licking his fingers and making dabs of sugar all over his body, until at last a whole crowd of laughing boys stood looking like yellow spotted sugar-clothed fiends. They are so childishly pleased, and it takes so little to win their confidence that, when once won, they are easily governed.

There is the human element in all races with which I have been in contact, and if once one can reach this side of their nature, as I have said before, and can take an interest in their welfare, much more can be done with them than by driving them. Obedience and respect ensue so long as the terms on which one is with them are not those of familiarity. This point cannot be reached in a day by any sudden action, or by excessive kindness—it takes both time and patience. Of course, where many thousands are

employed it is impossible for the manager to get into personal touch with them, but he indirectly can do so by selecting as his subordinates those who will act on this principle.

One thing my wife used to dislike immensely, and that was if, when she was sitting, perhaps in the evening, with the window open, a messenger boy would arrive with a note, and would come to the window and stand motionless, with his face peering into the room, waiting for the "Inkoosicas" to note his presence. To look up suddenly and see a black face peering in was certainly startling! Does it not speak much for the natives that one so rarely hears of any devilment committed by them?—especially when one considers how much the whites are in their power and how greatly they preponderate in numbers.

One of my first undertakings was the starting of a farm for growing mealies, or Indian corn as we call it. Now as all our mealies had to be freighted in (a five days' journey), and as a bag of mealies that cost in Johannesburg 12s. 6d. to 13s. 6d. cost with us 29s. to 30s., it was highly desirable that we should grow our own. I had placed a man in charge of the farm, and prepared a nice little house for his wife and children, and our first crop was coming up well when a swarm of locusts appeared. All the boys were immediately turned out with tin pots, kettles and pans, and started to make as much noise with them as possible in order to prevent them alighting, but all to no purpose, for down they came in vast multitudes, and every blade of the young corn disappeared as if by magic. A second crop was sown, and a second time the same thing happened. In the following year I was more successful, for no locusts appeared, and our mealie-growing proved a success.

For wattle-planting I also started to clear a few acres of ground and to plant. There was always plenty to keep us going, and, notwithstanding our distance from any town, we enjoyed our life in what was really a lovely climate, with many bright sunny days, though at certain seasons we used to get a good deal of fog. In some of the valleys—on the Koomatie, for instance—malaria of a nasty type was always present, and they were places to be avoided, unless, as sometimes happened, business matters connected with the mine compelled me to visit them.

I had barely got into harness when I received a notice from Johannesburg to present myself for the mine-managers' examination, due then in about five weeks' time. It was rather hard being so quickly picked out when half the mine-managers in Johannesburg had not passed it—and a far distant cry to come

all the way from that city and compel me to go up there. Accordingly I had to leave my wife alone, and set out for the exam. I arrived late one evening in that town; the examination was to commence the following day at 10 a.m. I went to the place designated in my notification paper, but meantime it had been removed elsewhere, and it was only just in time, after much searching, that I succeeded in finding it. I had begun to think my journey would be for nothing. The examination I considered a very fair one, sufficient to satisfy the several examiners that one had a practical knowledge of one's duties. The old boiler-inspector, who examined me on this section of it, spoke very bad English, and I had to keep on asking him to repeat. Seeing he was annoyed, and fearing he would mark me down, I apologized for my deafness, at which remark he visibly changed his expression to a more pleasant one. I was not really deaf, but I think I just saved myself by it. Eventually I received a green cardboard certificate, for which I had to pay a two guinea fee; this, written in the Boer Taal, signified that I was a "duly certified" mine manager, and so I was allowed to remain as such in the country. Without it, I should have had to return home, as everyone once called who failed to pass was not allowed to act as a mine manager, though, as I have said, half the mine managers at that time in Johannesburg had not been called upon for the examination, and a good number of them never could have passed it even if they had attempted it.

Returning to the Peak I found all well. I arrived at night, and as I rode into camp it struck me as a wonderful thing to see an outpost of industry in this country which was not yet properly subdued; the electric lamps were brilliantly lighting up the camp, amidst surroundings which were only those of barbarism. Let me try and picture to your imagination our outpost:—A camp, composed of a high mill building, with numerous large tanks outside it, and little groups of houses scattered about here and there in which lived the white folk; little train-loads of trucks carrying ore were running to and fro between the mine and the mill, while there resounded through the still atmosphere of the night the dull roar of the falling stamps inside the mill; outside this little grouping of civilization, with its comforts of modern life and its murmur of complex industrial enterprise, were located the little camps composed of kraals, built of cane and grass, within which the inhabitants lay bedded on mother earth.

Again, on high standards in the centre of the camp, were the great arc-lamps shedding their light over the big cyanide tanks, with a gang of Kaffirs emptying car-loads of sand into them; while

down in the mine, by the help of electric light and compressed air—both deriving their power from the little camp hidden down below the Falls, eight miles away—were numbers of black men, hard at work punching away with hammer and drill, with here and there a white face directing them; their bodies clothed in their shiny velvet skin, bathed in perspiration. With sparks flying out as the steel meets the hard flinty rock, you wonder how they can, in their naked garb, stand up against them and the flying splinters and dust of the rock. They are a people, too, unused to such work, only used to the breezy, balmy air of the Veldt, or else to its hot, sunny glare—wonderful! I have many a time remarked upon it as I have watched them, and though I am so familiar with this kind of life, it still strikes me as wonderful.

A little later you will see them crowding up into higher tunnels, hiding there while the firemen charge the holes already bored in the rocks with powerful explosives, and, lighting the fuses, they also retire to the upper levels. Then one hears the deep boom of the blasting going on below them, and after a time, sufficient to allow the smoke to clear away, down they clamber to resume their work again.

In the mill you may see these unclothed natives working around the machinery, and taking to it as if they had been born to it. There the ore is being pounded and ground to the finest dust, and afterwards passed over amalgamated copper plates, where part of the gold is caught; the escaping sands then pass through numerous concentrating machines, on and into the tanks, where the remaining gold in them is dissolved out by the use of cyanide of potassium, a deadly poison. Finally, those golden solutions flow silently into the precipitating room through long boxes partly filled with zinc shavings, on which the gold deposits itself. Subsequently the gold thus caught is collected, and smelted together with the gold derived from the amalgam caught on the copper plates, after it has been retorted in order to distil off the mercury from it. The smelted bars of gold are then assayed for their fineness, weighed, and packed in boxes ready for their long journey home where they finally arrive at the Mint.

Now in all these varied operations, what strikes one as so amazing in all that we call semi-civilized and uncivilized peoples is their wonderful adaptability in accustoming themselves to their new habits of life, and in acquiring a fair knowledge of them, and this is true whether they be Chinese, Koreans, Malays, Siamese, Central or South American Indians, Khirgese, or the Ethiopian race. The general complaint against them is that they are never

thorough in their work ; that is generally true, though there are many exceptions ; yet why should we expect more from them ? Their whole environment (except for the Chinese, whose civilization is of a different order from that of our own, yet a high one) militates against anything approaching to what we actually get out of them. Everything points, in my opinion, to great latent powers which, if properly developed from childhood, would help to raise them to a much higher plane than the one they now live on.

Notwithstanding their total ignorance of the new conditions they lived under here, we rarely had accidents ; I remember only one that was fatal, and that was in the mill, but except contusions in in the mine and a few minor cuts, there were seldom any really serious accidents. That one was a very dreadful one, for a poor little Zulu boy somehow—no one knows how—got caught between a belt and a rapidly revolving pulley in a hidden part of the mill. No one saw it until a jar in the smooth running of the machinery brought it to light. There was the little boy being whirled round the pulley, between it and the belt, the latter not being thrown off the pulley by the obstruction until the machine was stopped. The body was so flattened out to a pulp that it could not be recognized.

We had quite an amusing accident of another sort, when a cow broke down a low fence just round one of the huge solution vats sunk in the ground, and plunged into it. As it contained a weak solution of cyanide of potassium we expected to see it dead, but not so ! Mrs. Cow continued to swim about until we got a tripod erected and hauled her out, when she went off on to the Veldt and began browsing, none the worse for her early morning swim.

Our doctor was a great sportsman, as was our cyanide manager. Both had fine batteries of guns, and some very fine sporting dogs imported from home ; for buck of any kind we had to go far, save in the deep kloofs around where a few small buck still hid. Of birds, partridge were plentiful. Now the doctor was a man who had not the least sense of location, and was continually getting lost. I have known him to be so within half-a-mile of his own home. Many a time have I had to send out search parties to look for him and bring him in. I never in my life came across a man who was so unobservant of objects around him—even the points of the compass he never kept in his head ; but, the worst of it all was, he fancied he lacked nothing in his knowledge of his surroundings, and would not even carry a compass. I have heard him argue that we were travelling westward, though the sun was rising



right in his eyes! This was always a joke amongst us, but he never seemed to see it was due to his own want of observation. He was a splendid surgeon, but had no sympathy for any Kaffir, and the poor brutes were often put to unnecessary torture by his rough, but successful, methods of treatment. I remember once that he and a Boer (who subsequently became a very celebrated leader, and whose name I will not mention) had a severe altercation on our verandah, and as their language was anything but polite, with my wife sitting in the room inside, I turned them both out of my compound.

In the months when the grass on the veldt was burnt up in the Transvaal but was good with us, many thousands of cattle used to be driven into Swaziland, and from the Peak to Bremersdorp the Boers might be seen squatting round their many camp-fires at night. A little before the end of September (when the rains set in) they would start trekking, and driving their herds before them back to the farms in the Transvaal. The only insult or rudeness I ever received from any Boers was once, when riding with another Englishman to Bremersdorp, some young Boers we passed on the way openly spat at us, and made some coarse remarks against the English. I always found them hospitable and willing to lead one on to game, and give one the first shot. They are usually put down as a dirty, unclean race of people, but this applies only to certain sections of them. Where water was plentiful in the district they resided in they were remarkably clean, but where water was very scarce they were just the opposite. One knows oneself how difficult it is to keep clean in a desert country where water is scarce, and one can thus easily account for the reputation they have acquired.

## CHAPTER X.

### THREATENED SWAZIE OUTBREAK.

As the first year went by, ugly rumours began to reach us of a possible outbreak of the Swazies ; something was brewing, but what was giving rise to these rumours we could not get as much as a clue to. At last they became too persistent, and I sent away the women and children. My wife and small boy remained, as he was laid up with a bad attack of influenza. Soon afterwards early one morning, a native runner came in, sent by our lawyer in Barberton, followed by another sent out by the editor of Barberton's only paper, warning me to bring my wife and child in without a moment's loss of time, as the Swazies had either risen or were about to do so. Though we had no confirmation of it, I called our white employees together, and had a consultation with them, and it was decided they would remain and keep things going while I would take my wife and son into Barberton.

Taking Kitson, the blacksmith, a good Colonial who knew all the native dialects, we left to ride in with my small boy mounted in front of me. We pressed our horses on, and arrived in Barberton after a tedious journey to find the place in a great state of excitement. The reports coming in from Bremersdorp were bad ; we learned that the king had been summoned to appear before the Court there to be tried for having killed one of his head Indunas, but had refused at first to come in, though subsequently he did so, though only under a safe conduct pass given him by our representative, Smuts. It turned out, however, that when he came in he had surrounded the town with his Impis in case the Boers should detain him. They again summoned him to appear, and, he having refused to do so, the Boer Government had sent into Swaziland the Staats Artillery and a big Commando, while Barberton (as we found) was already guarded by volunteers sent down from Johannesburg and Pretoria. No one knew what action the Swazie king would then take. The Queen Mother was against her son the king, and certain " Impis " were said to be loyal to her while the rest remained on the king's side.

At midnight I started back for the mine. It was a beautiful night, and having relieved my mind of further anxiety on behalf of my wife and son, I thoroughly enjoyed that silent ride through the intervening hills, and arrived back to find all well, save that

the King had sent for our Swazies. I immediately decided to call them up, and having learned that they were divided—some being for the King, others for the Mother—I told them that I had heard the King had sent for them, that that being so I did not want them to run away without any pay that might be due to them, that in the evening we would pay off all those who wished to go, and that those who so decided were to hand their cards in and get them checked. About a little more than half decided to go, and were paid off; then I felt our camp was in a safer position with these elements of possible mischief gone.

About a day or two afterwards I learned that the whole of the seventy police stationed about nine miles away had left for Bremersdorp at a moment's notice, leaving all their women and children behind unprotected, notwithstanding a large Swazie kraal near them whose chief or Induna was known to be a King's man. At the same time I heard from Barberton that the Sheba mine had shut down, and that the whole of their staff had gone into Barberton, that two trains were kept waiting with steam up to take away the women and children out of the town at a moment's notice, while more volunteers had arrived there, and that the Staats Artillery and the large Commando were well on their way towards Bremersdorp, as the King continued to defy the Government.

The Swazies themselves either did not know exactly what was going on or would not say, and, though in the middle of the country, our information was very contradictory. From Barberton it was more positive, and it looked bad that the Sheba mine, well inside the Transvaal, should have shut down. I was in a quandary what to do, when, coming out of the mine one night about 8 p.m., I found that the whole of the women and children from the police camp, with their waggons and oxen, had come to us for protection.

We could not leave them, so this decided me to remain at all hazards. Things looked so serious that I called the S'hangans together and told them what was happening, and that I had decided if the Swazie Impis came our way the whole camp would go underground, that is into the mine; we would blow up the entrances and wait there for relief which would come. I said that I was going to depend on them to act as scouts, that they were to put out a ring of scouts about six miles distant, on all good look-out points, and signal the approach of any Swazies, and that the rest of the Swazies were to be paid off and sent away.

We reckoned that the Zulus would remain neutral—the Swazies would not dare to touch them, nor would they be likely to join

the Swazies. The S'hangans (to whom I had given leave to go back to their homes) thought it better policy to remain with us.

Next, we drew up all the waggons in laager round one of the entrances to the mine, and made the women and children camp there. During my absence they had invaded my house, and piled all their dirty bundles in it. These were soon cleared out and the rooms cleaned. That night we boarded over some huge old stopes, or caverns, in the mine, and brought in all our food supplies and those from the local store below us; in the mine we had plenty of ventilation, and water, so were prepared for a long siege if need be. The S'hangans acted splendidly; put their own men out as scouts night and day, and kept up constant communication with us. The Boer women did not appear to be perturbed; they seemed to take things sensibly, but were of the opinion that as their husbands had gone off so suddenly things were serious.

At the Falls we kept the power-works going, keeping only one white man there and running them by natives, and with the broken ore in the mine we kept the mill still going. A few mornings after this the S'hangans reported that the King himself and a small escort had passed within a few miles of us, a little beyond their furthest outpost, and it was believed he was making for Zululand. This proved to be true, for he escaped into that country and surrendered to our Resident there. The police returned, and once more we resumed work under peaceful conditions.

I had previously sent in a letter to the authorities at Barberton that in the event of hostilities we should retire into the mine, which I had stocked with several weeks' provisions and firewood (it was of ample size to hold us) and that I intended, as stated, to blow up the entrances if compelled to do so, and would there await relief. My staff behaved splendidly; not a man left for Barberton. Kitson, whom I had left to bring in later news, came back, so all stood to their posts. Clements, the man who took the greatest risk by remaining at the Falls, deserved all praise.

Now, what was our position in relation to the Boer Government? We, as English, were not allowed rifles; when the first rumours of a rising arose I applied for a permit for forty rifles and ammunition, to be provided at our expense. Kruger, when it was referred to him, refused it. I wrote then to Smuts, the British representative, a Cape Dutchman—a very loyal and capable one he was—requesting him to put Kruger's refusal of the permit on record, and asking him at the same time that, should anything happen to us, heavy damages for our families should be claimed. As soon as the Swazie scare was over I rode into Barberton, and arrived at

the Granville Hotel soon after midnight. At 5.30 a.m., the Colonel of the volunteers was knocking at my bedroom door, and wished to see me on important business! We sat in the pretty little garden forming the courtyard of the hotel which surrounded it, while he informed me that he was directed to march out to our mines with part of his force, escorting a consignment of forty rifles and 30,000 rounds of ammunition. I argued that the troops were on the march out of the country, the King had given himself up, and we didn't now want the rifles or ammunition, and that when we were in dire want of them we had been refused them.

I went on to tell him that if the escort, a big one, arrived my boys would all run away directly they saw it, and that as I had kept the mine going until now, and all was peaceful again, why should the Government choose this time to upset us? To this he replied his orders were definite, and all he asked me for was a guide to conduct them through the hills to the mine. I promised if he would give me the day in town I would be ready to do so myself the following morning. He pressed me to go that day, but finally agreed to my proposal.

Now it so happened that we bought from each of two stores in town several hundreds of pounds worth of goods per month; and the Frie-director and Field-cornet being the two largest principals in the two concerns respectively, I appealed to them to use their influence. I put my case before them, and I wound up by stating that if the escort went out and if my boys ran away (as undoubtedly would happen) I would close down the mine indefinitely. They agreed each to telegraph to President Kruger, asking for a reconsideration of the matter, to which a peremptory reply was received: "The escort was to go out." Again they telegraphed, backed by several of their Boer friends, this time came a reply that the escort need only go half-way. If such a large escort was needed at all it was obvious to everyone that it was at the Swaziland end it would be needed.

However, all was arranged accordingly, and we left at daybreak next morning. Six mounted police coming from my camp met us half-way to relieve the volunteer escort. They immediately turned back, taking with them the rifles and ammunition carried by the Kaffirs. I stayed until late with the Colonel and officers, who had bivouacked for the night, and who intended returning to Barberton at sunrise. Riding in late at night, as I entered my camp I was informed the police had commandeered two rooms in my house. In one they were sleeping, in the other they had stored their arms. As I entered I turned on the main switch of the

electric light, which had been turned off, and quietly pushing open the door of the room they were sleeping in I turned on the light. I never saw more frightened men than those six as they jumped to their feet, not knowing what had happened—not only had they taken possession of this room, but had brought their women-folk with them. Here they remained for a long time guarding those precious rifles and ammunition, and preventing me from bringing my wife out.

When they finally cleared out, taking the rifles and ammunition with them, I went into Barberton, and took the opportunity of again paying a visit to the Sheba mine. On my return, finding I was late for the train, Pope (the manager) guaranteed he would see to it that I caught it. Getting on to a hand trolley we sped along down the four miles of track connecting the mine with the main line, and away we went at full speed the whole way, he having let the car "rip," as he expressed it. We spun round curves, alongside precipices, across trestle-bridges, and when we arrived at the station the journey had never before been made in less time. It was a mad, devil-may-care ride, and an experience unique of its sort. Why that car never jumped the track and landed us into the depths below (as by all rules of the road it ought to have done, and that a hundred times over) was a surprise to ourselves after we had safely landed at the station, alas, only to see my train steaming out of it. Returning to the mine—with strict injunctions from my friend not to let his wife know anything about our escapade—we found the news had already reached her that the car had been seen careering down the mountain with (as it was supposed) its brake broken. Meantime, fortunately for her, she had received the news by telephone that we had safely arrived at the bottom.

That evening, I rode into Barberton on a superb milk-white Arab horse, whose easy pace was a delight to experience. This horse had been imported by the former manager, a wealthy man, who on leaving had left it to his successor. Only this morning I saw his death announced in the paper, which brought to my mind the above episode.

It was on the road along which I rode to Barberton that a little later on the secretary, who was bringing in some gold bars into town, was held up by a highwayman and robbed of them. In his pack was a suit of dress clothes, and this daring robber made him change into them and walk up and down in front of him for his amusement. A few weeks afterwards this man was shot while trying to effect a bank robbery at Pietersburg. It was surprising that more

of these "hold-ups" did not take place. Our own bullion used to be taken into Barberton through those lonely hills, along a narrow trail on which, in scores of places, half a dozen men could have been held up by a daring highwayman, yet never in all those many months I was at the Peak, was an attempt made.

I had made arrangements to take my wife and son back to the mine, but before doing so I went up the line to visit another mine beyond the Sheba. Arriving at the nearest station to it, a Kaffir met me with a horse to ride out to the mine. It was a boiling hot day, and I had some seven to eight miles to go; the sun was glaring down on me with its more than ordinarily piercing rays—at least, so I thought—and I was anxious to push on, but my beast would not. What sort of an animal it was I could not determine; it might have been a sheep in a horse's skin (for beyond a sheep's sort of gait I could not get it to go), and those seven to eight miles took me three hours to make. Meeting the manager, who was walking on crutches, I warmly asked him if my horse was purposely bought for his special benefit, as I could imagine it was only fit for a cripple.

Here I stayed to inspect the mine, located at the top of some hills overlooking the valley in the camp below. The ore from it was brought down to the mill by means of an aerial ropeway, along which the buckets travelled to and fro, but no one was permitted to travel in them; the law prohibited passenger traffic along it. Now, as it was a long way round to the mine, and uphill the whole way, I said I would "inspect" the ropeway, and go up in a bucket—this was not breaking the law. From the receiving station at the mill I started, seated in the bottom of one of the numerous buckets which hung at regular intervals along the rope. All went well until about half-way up, when the ropeway stopped, and there I was left suspended between earth and heaven with a clean drop of about two hundred feet below me. What had happened? They shouted up to me, but I could hear nothing that was said. In that iron bucket, with the sun's full glare on it, it was like being slowly cooked to death in an oven. After an hour and a half thus suspended, the bucket again began to move, and in a few minutes more I was safely landed at the mine. What had really taken place was that the landing man had surreptitiously gone off, having taken a holiday, and left a friend of his to take his place. This man, seeing a passenger coming up in the bucket, lost his nerve, and shut down the ropeway. He then went off to find the man whose place he had taken, and I had to wait until he turned up.

During my stay with the manager he only referred to his having

broken his leg, as I understood him, by a fall. When I left the mine a different looking animal was supplied to me to ride to the station, and, suspecting nothing, I gaily mounted my steed and rode off; but almost the moment after starting the brute threw up its head, seized the bit firmly in his teeth, and made a clean bolt of it. I whizzed past the mill, and along the straight road leading to the station, when it took me all my effort to keep my seat. Suddenly my mount swerved off the road, making direct for the timber not far off. There was nothing then left to do but to come off, for if I entered the timber it would be almost certain death. Hitherto I had been gripping my saddle tightly; relaxing my hold I did not come off, though I wanted to, and it was only by a great effort I cast myself off the brute, when I pitched on my head and saw the moon and stars. Rising in a dazed state, I found blood trickling into my eyes, and my right hand was disabled. There was no water near by, so I retraced my steps back to the road; here I had the luck to meet a Kaffir boy leading a riding horse going in the direction of the station. My bloody appearance frightened the little chap, and I had no difficulty in getting the horse, for he had cleared off. The job was to mount; with considerable difficulty I did so, and rode the remaining two miles.

Arriving at the station I soon got my head washed, and found the damage was only some slight scalp wounds which bled rather profusely, and gave me a somewhat dangerously wounded appearance, but my hand was badly damaged—the back of it was raw and torn, and filled with small grit and dust. Bandaged up I entered the one train of the day, and arrived at Barberton shortly afterwards. On arriving at the hotel I found my wife was out, and before she came in I had time to get into fresh clothes and clean up, but meantime some good-natured person who had seen me in my dilapidated-looking state had sought her out and informed her I had been seriously hurt, so that her relief was great to find me all right.

That evening the doctor came in, and made me plank my hand down on the table while he, with a pair of forceps and lance, picked out the dirt and cleansed out the wounds. This took two hours to do, and during them I suffered excruciating torment, but he made a good job of it, though it was quite a long time before I got the use of my hand again. I had to keep it in a sling high up for if I lowered my arm the pain was severe, otherwise I felt little of it. I afterwards learned that the manager had broken his leg by that same horse having bolted with him, and it had not



been ridden since until I mounted him, so my friend paid me out for my growling over the horse he had sent to fetch me out. I also learnt that I had unwittingly caused the death of a Kaffir boy who, as I rode past the aerial ropeway, happened to be pushing off a bucket on to the rope. Seeing me, he hung too long on to it, and was carried off his perch by it and left suspended in the air. Unfortunately he had not the presence of mind to climb into the bucket, but hung on until, letting go, he fell from a great height, and was instantly dashed to a pulp.

## CHAPTER XI.

### OUR SON'S TERRIBLE ACCIDENT.

EARLY next day, as had been pre-arranged, we set out for the Peak, and it proved to be one of the most tragic days of our lives. My wife was mounted, and my small boy also, a tall, powerful Swazie leading his horse. With one of my staff who had come in to help me, and with the numerous Kaffirs carrying our baggage, we thus started. It was one of those glorious mornings so common in this part of the world as we slowly wended our way up the long ascent of Abotts' Hill, intending to halt at the half-way house for the night. On the Lomatie side of the top of this hill we drew up and exclaimed on the beauties of the panorama that lay stretched out before us. There we stood for some time absorbed in its grandeur and splendour.

Suddenly I heard my companion shout out in a loud voice in Kaffir to the Swazie leading my little son's horse that he had dropped the reins. In a second the Swazie made a wild grab at them; the horse threw up its head, and he missed them, and with his arms going round like a windmill's sails he tried again, but missed. At this the horse took fright, and bolted down the steep flank of these hills and cleared a ledge of rocks that stood up like a wall. The little chap was still holding on, when he turned to look back, and, losing his seat, fell, but caught in one stirrup, hung with his head on the ground. Down the hill the horse madly galloped. Meantime I had dismounted, and was running to try and cut the horse off at a bend near the base of the hill, when I saw the stirrup leather break away. The boy had fallen through the reins, and getting caught in them was then flung three times up above the saddle and banged to the ground before he finally fell clear.

Coming up I found him in a kneeling attitude, with his head between his knees; on picking him up I could discover no signs of life. His face was smothered in blood and his nose and upper lip fearfully disfigured, giving him a horrible appearance. Putting my finger in his eye there was no reflex action, and I could feel no pulse. After a time my wife came up, and I broke the news to her that the little chap had gone, and I said that perhaps it was better for him, or he might have been marred for life.

There we sat, with the little boy in my lap, when I thought I perceived a sigh, and so did my companion, but not so my wife.

Without waiting a moment he sprang into his saddle, and rode off into Barberton for the doctor. For hours we sat there ; the child had begun to breathe visibly, but showed no further signs of recovery. About 2 p.m. the doctor arrived. On examination his leg was found to be broken high up, and so contused and swollen as to be almost unrecognizable. Later on some Kaffirs arrived with a mattress, and on this we laid him, and slowly carried him into Barberton, where we arrived at 8 p.m. By this time the boy had recovered so far that he was in an unconscious, raving condition, and continued so for four days and five nights, never ceasing his distressing cries night or day.

On the third day I was compelled to ride out to the mines. Arriving there I went through the mine and mill, made some necessary arrangements, and immediately rode back to Barberton, only to find the little chap still in the same condition. I sat up with him at nights, and on the morning of the fifth day the doctor came in, and stayed a couple of hours ; my wife came in, and I carried him off to breakfast. Then he told me the boy was fast sinking, and I had better break the news to my wife. Going back to do so I found the invalid had suddenly come to, and was apparently quite clear in his mind, for finding himself bound down in the bed he exclaimed " Father, what have I done to be bound down by chains to this bed ? "

He had no recollection or remembrance of the accident or of that morning's ride. After six weeks he gradually gained strength. Owing to the contused state of his leg no splints could be put on, and we had to be content to simply have it stretched out by a weight suspended on the end of the bed to keep a tension on it. At the end of this time they put it in plaster of Paris. Several times during this period I rode out to the mines and back again, but that rough, though beautiful, ride had no longer any charm for me. A Scotch nurse who happened to be in Barberton had been unremitting in her attention to the little invalid, also a Miss T——, who happened to be staying there on a visit from home ; she afterwards came out with us, and remained several months at the mine until she returned to England. To her, too, we owed much for her kindness and never-ceasing attention.

But I must not let her off too easily without giving an amusing incident in connection with her visit. One night my wife woke me up, saying there was someone walking about in our sitting room. Jumping up, I could distinctly hear sounds proceeding from it as of someone with boots. Seizing my revolver, I crept along the passage leading to the door ; Miss T—— was sleeping in the room

beyond. I flung open the door from whence the sounds proceeded, and called out in a loud voice "Don't be afraid, Miss T——, I am here." The moon was shining through the window of the room, and there in the far corner was a donkey, who had quietly stabled himself in it, having found his way along the verandah; finding the outside door of the room open he had walked in! I had quite a difficult task to get him out for being a very tame animal he was loath to be driven out. Next morning at breakfast we found that Miss T—— had slept all through the noise, and knew nothing about it, much to our amusement.

At another time we had a more unpleasant experience soon after Miss T—— had left us. It was a very hot summer's night, and our bedroom windows (opening out on to the verandah) were wide open; my wife again woke me up, and told me someone was at the window. Looking up, I saw a man's head inside it with a revolver in his hand. I recognized him as an Australian shift-boss in our employ. Getting up, I asked him if anything was the matter in the mill. "No," he said, "but he had come to tell me that he had had a row with some of the miners, who had chucked him out, and that he was on his way back to shoot them." This was interlarded with many oaths. Seeing he was drunk, I told him I thought his revolver was not in good order and to let me just have a look at it. All this time he had been unpleasantly flourishing it about. Fortunately he handed it me, but point-blank, with the muzzle facing me. Having got hold of it, I said I would put it right for him and let him have it on the morrow, and told him to go home now to bed, and that in the morning we would go for the boys who had insulted him. After a little more persuasion, off he went, and, fearing lest he might return, we had to sleep in a hot stifling room with the windows shut and fastened. He was a good workman, subject to occasional but rare outbursts and always then in a cantankerous mood. This one, however, was his last with us, for on the next day I gave him the "sack."

This reminds me of another unpleasant episode, though of a different kind. A Kaffir put his head in at the same window and told me our drinking water was no good; if true, it was a very unpleasant announcement, for the spring was the only one near us. Going down to the spring I found that a Kaffir who had died had, during my absence in Johannesburg, been buried a little above it by the direction of a white man, who, it is best to think, never went himself to choose the spot for the grave. We had to take out the body, dig out all around, and fill it up with charcoal, as we depended wholly upon the spring and could not abandon it.

I must return again to my story : our other friends in town were most sympathetic and kind. Ultimately the boy grew up physically strong with none of the shortening of the leg which three doctors had predicted ; but there was always something missing about him (which I think only his parents noticed), until fits suddenly developed as he was recovering from an attack of measles ; a radiograph was taken at the suggestion of his doctor of baby-hood's days and revealed that there had been an extensive fracture of the skull which at the time was never discovered. A thickening of the skull was also shown. The skull was then trepanned and a portion removed, and though he was free from attacks for a short time they developed again and gradually softening of the brain ensued ; he is a hopeless invalid now.

Once more we started for the mine, carrying the boy in a stretcher, but the Kaffirs, who were unused to carrying a load in this fashion, took so long to make the journey that it was long after dark before we got to the half-way house. My wife, who was so anxious about the boy and would not leave him, had to dismount and make her way stumbling along in the dark with our old friend Kitson, the blacksmith, giving her his arm, while I walked or stumbled by the stretcher, telling the small one stories to keep his mind away from the dark and the fear of baboons that had got into his head.

On this road troops of them were often seen. On one of my rides out I encountered a large troop of them right across my trail ; they showed no signs of making off as I approached them, and only when I put spurs to my horse and took off my hat and waved it at them, yelling at the top of my voice, did they move off, the old male ones remaining behind to the very last. I have never heard of them attacking anyone, but I certainly thought they would, and the only thing left to do was to charge them boldly.

Next day my boy was terrified at the thought of crossing the Devil's Bridge, fearing the boys might let him fall over it ; it was strange that he recollected it for his memory was very bad ; so when approaching it I suddenly pulled some waterproofs over him and held up an umbrella, telling him a heavy shower was coming on. Thus we crossed it without his knowing we were doing so. At any time the crossing was rather alarming, until—later on—we cut down the ridge and so broadened the track across it.

Arrived at the mine, we laid the invalid in his stretcher on the dining-room table, when "Cherry," the cook boy, came in and exchanged greetings with the occupant by laughing exclamations of " Oh ! " on either side.

As he grew stronger we found he had almost forgotten everything he had ever learnt. Of his multiplication table, which he had known quite perfectly up to twenty times, and which I had taught him by a kind of improvised game, he had no recollection, and even his "twice times" table had gone from him. So for a year we did not press him to learn anything, his governess just keeping him employed. It was not very long afterwards that our second daughter was born, hence my anxiety not only about the boy but also for his mother. Moses, the odd man, was selected by her for the babe's nurse, and an excellent one he proved to be. In South Africa the native boys are well known as making good nurses.

## CHAPTER XII.

### EVENTS FORESHADOWING BOER WAR.

OUR second year was one of political anxiety which culminated in the Boer War. My first inkling that the Boers intended it came to me when I heard them state that God never prospered those who took the offensive, and, going a journey northward, after the baby was born, I heard the same thing said, wherever I went. It struck me as curious that Boers far removed from each other were all saying the same thing. Then it flashed upon my mind that the Boer Government had recently called in all the Field-Cornets and had held a secret meeting with them. This, I reasoned, must have been for some purpose, and in all likelihood they were the disseminators of the above saying; if so, what could be the intention of it? then it occurred to me that in all probability it was with the object of putting the English off the scent, and that they were preparing for war. This seemed so reasonable an explanation that I determined to keep my ears and eyes wide open.

From certain unguarded expressions of our Governess, I felt that she was in the know, and that something was going on at Waterfall Onder. A secret agent sent there found that a train arrived every morning from Delagoa Bay, and that it had been doing so for some time; that before daybreak it was off-loaded and its contents put in waggons which were immediately sent away, and that the boxes were heavy and probably ammunition ones. Further, that these waggons were engaged in placing their contents in caches at various places up country. Later, I found that the Boers were going to trek back out of Swaziland early in the season, a thing they had never done before; and that any Boer not exchanging his old rifle for a Mauser was being fined £5, and again £5 if found without eighty rounds of spare ammunition. At another time in Barberton I overheard the Field-Cornet say, on opening a telegram from President Kruger, "this means all South Africa is ours," but what its contents were I did not learn.

Then our Governess, who was in constant correspondence with the Boer Government officials, and thought she hid it from me, in the course of our friendly conversations let drop, unwittingly,

many things which in themselves had apparently no significance, but which, carefully noted and pieced together, gave me a fair insight as to what was going on; that preparations for war were being actively carried on was to my mind a certainty. Big guns, too, were being imported through Delagoa Bay; this I knew about, and also that the Field-Cornets were sending in lists of the men on their Commandos. Then came the news that there was to be a conference held at Bloemfontein between President Kruger and Milner (now Lord Milner).

A letter of mine sent home was forwarded to the Colonial Office, stating a good deal of what I knew of these preparations, and in the last paragraph of it I wrote much as follows:

“That as the Boers have decided on war, on some pretext or the other, notwithstanding whatever terms might be offered by our Government to them, they would be refused. That war was determined on and would break out in the latter part of the following September or the beginning of October, and that there would then be active commandeering. Whether England meant war or not, it was in my opinion an absolute certainty there would be war.”

This must have been written early in March. We all know now that our terms were liberal, that they were refused by the Boers, and that at the end of September they commenced commandeering, and then invaded Natal. The Colonial Office was good enough to acknowledge my letter with thanks, and to state that they would be glad of any further information I might have to send them. The letter was enclosed in an official envelope with O.H.M.S. printed on it, but crossed out only by a stroke of the pen. There was no doubt I was a marked man after this oversight on their part. Our Governess I knew was keeping a close watch over me, but I kept my counsel to myself, and what news I gave her was always of a misleading nature. I don't think she suspected me of this. Not to a soul in camp save my wife did I ever drop a hint of my suspicions about her.

About this time I came into direct conflict with the Boer Government over the question of the Transvaal Dynamite monopoly. In order to understand it, it is necessary to go back to past history. Previous to the handing back of Swaziland to the Boer Government a joint Commission of the two Governments had met to consider and pass judgment on the many concessions the late King Umbandine had given away. These were not only numerous but of such a variety that at last, when none further could be thought of, some individual proposed one for “anything not yet given away”



which was actually granted! From all this multiplicity of Concessions the Commission selected those that they considered as holding good in equity, and these were subsequently enumerated in the convention conveying Swaziland back to the Boers, and were held to be valid. Amongst them was one for the manufacture of dynamite in the country and for the export and import of such dynamite. Now as this clashed with the Boer monopoly, the Boer Government held the legal interpretation of the word "such" to refer to the dynamite manufactured in the country,—in other words, if this interpretation was the correct one the manufacturers were given permission to export it and to re-import it, manifestly an absurdity. It was obvious that the terms of the agreement of the Concession had been drawn up loosely and by men unused to legal phraseology, and that the intent of the Concession was not only for the manufacture, but also for the export or import of dynamite generally.

The original Concession-holders had sold their rights to a Johannesburg Company, who appointed a sole Agent to represent them in Bremersdorp. He had advertised the sale of dynamite for months in the one weekly Swaziland paper at Bremersdorp, and had written to me offering 400 cases of dynamite at about 25s. per case below Johannesburg prices. I refused to consider his offer until I had again been to Pretoria and had consulted the Inspector of Explosives about it. Soon afterwards I met him there, and put the matter before him, when he replied that "he hoped I would place the order and give the Government the opportunity of making a test case." On my return the order was placed, the delivery to be on the Swaziland side of the border. Eventually the cases were safely delivered within the border, carted up and placed in the magazine. The Inspector of Mines, who was staying with me at the time, being much disturbed, reported the matter.

I also fell out with him on another matter, though personally we kept the best of friends. He was a brother of the editor of the *Cologne Gazette*, and was himself a very charming personality, but a stickler for the letter of the law; later he fell fighting on the Boer side. I had built a new magazine for our explosives, and in this were stored the two waggon loads of dynamite; the plans for it had been submitted to the authorities and passed; the magazine itself had also been passed by the Inspector. But the law required that an enamel plate with the number of the magazine should be affixed to it before it was used. For this plate the fee was two guineas, which I had paid to the proper authorities with a request for it to be supplied. Months had passed,

and although I had sent in repeated reminders, still no plate was sent. The Inspector held that I had no business to use the magazine meanwhile and threatened me with a £10 fine. On the other hand, I threatened that if he closed it up I would sue the Government for the damages caused by the neglect of their officials in not having supplied us with a plate. Finally it was agreed he would report me to the authorities and see what they would do. This made no difference to our amicable relations, and as he was a man well versed in the affairs of the outside world, we greatly enjoyed his stay with us.

Very soon after his visit a Lieutenant of the Police and five police, all mounted, rode up one day accompanied by waggons, and demanded the keys of my magazine; these I gave up under a written protest. Forthwith they proceeded to the magazine, and loaded up my 300 cases of dynamite, and left for Bremersdorp, telling me it was confiscated. Arriving at Bremersdorp it was parked in the town. It was, too, at a time when thunderstorms were prevalent. As there was no magazine there to put the dynamite into, they had a white elephant on their hands. The Bremersdorp white population were in a frantic state, day after day they sent shoals of telegrams to Pretoria petitioning that it should be sent away.

At last one morning the police arrived back in my camp with the dynamite, put it into our magazine, locked the door and sealed it. As soon as they had gone we broke open the magazine and started to draw on the explosives. I had received nothing in writing about the affair. If they put back confiscated stores into our magazine, I held they had returned it to me. Legally, they had no right under any pretext to use our magazine, much less to seal it up. The fat was in the fire. It was not long before I received a *criminal* summons to appear before the court at Bremersdorp. This was served on Saturday mid-day; the trial was to take place on the Monday following at 10 a.m., and involved a journey for which their own police were allowed three days. Knowing it would mean a heavy fine if I did not appear in time I started off at once with the Accountant, taking a spare horse apiece, and arrived on Sunday evening.

On the way we stopped the night at the Old Forbes Reef Mines, where we met several Boers who were imbibing too much and talking freely about the coming war. Without being offensive, they told us that all we Britishers would be driven out of Africa and across the sea.

Upon our arrival in town we found our lawyer was away and

not expected back until very late. I called that evening on our Resident Smuts, and to my surprise I found he knew all about the affair and requested me to have a shorthand writer to take down the following day's proceedings in Court. He informed me that it was an important case and one he would personally watch, as it might lead to an international question of grave importance. Early next morning I found our lawyer; he said that he had no time then to go into the matter but that, nevertheless, he would do his best for me. I asked him to try and obtain a postponement of the case, but he replied that with the tension then existing between the British and Boers he did not think it would be granted.

At 10 a.m. I put in an appearance. I politely asked the Judge if I might have a chair and be seated, as I was fatigued with my long journey. This he refused and for two days I was kept standing with my back to a white-washed wall. First we were sued as contravening the law by our waggons, reported as not having been preceded by a man carrying a red flag. It was pointed out that the flag had been tied to the front of the waggon when travelling in the veldt, where no human habitation existed,—not even a Kaffir kraal,—but that when approaching camp a man had gone forward with the flag; further, that when the police carried off our dynamite they had no red flag shown at all; but it was all without effect, for we were fined £10.

Then began the real case. The invoices made out by the sole Agent of the Swaziland Dynamite Company were produced, and were found to have been receipted by him for the value of the dynamite and paid by myself. The files of back newspapers advertising him as the sole agent of the Dynamite Company were produced, as evidence in my favour, but were not allowed to be put in as such. He himself was in Court and willing to go into the witness box to testify that he alone was responsible for the importation of the dynamite of which I was accused; this, too, they refused. The prosecuting counsel contended that I, as the General Manager of the Company, was personally importing it and must be held responsible. Smuts had told me previously, before going into Court, that under the Convention-Treaty a British subject when on trial was entitled to have everything spoken in Court interpreted to him; therefore when Judge and Counsel kept on making remarks and carrying on a conversation between them in the Taal tongue, I, each time they did so, demanded to know what was being said. This made them very angry, but I kept on insisting.

For nearly two hours they argued, my lawyer putting up a very good fight; finally the Judge brought me in as guilty and then

went on to pass sentence as follows: "Under the circumstances of the then heated political atmosphere and the tension existing between the British and Boers he would pass the minimum sentence he could, namely, a fine of £100 or six months' imprisonment." I was then given two hours within which to pay the fine, and, if it was not paid by that time, I was to be arrested.

Smuts gave me his opinion that I had a clear case which he would report and would recommend our Government to take up. I had a claim for damages, and, if imprisoned, a very considerable one. I told Smuts that if I didn't think the war was just about to break out I would refuse to pay the fine and would go to prison,—a course which would be more likely than the payment of a fine to force our Government into taking up what was a clear case of gross injustice, no evidence of my having imported the dynamite having been produced. The Judge, moreover, had said, "if it had not been for the friction then existing he would certainly have passed the maximum sentence, namely £800 fine or two years' imprisonment."

On my return to Court I paid the fine. Afterwards whom should I meet in the Club but the Judge! I asked him if he would favour me with a few minutes' conversation. On retiring to an inner room I told him his reputation was so well known for fairness that I thoroughly understood that he had been acting under orders, and so certain was I that the verdict would be against me,—and equally certain that the Boer Government would give me the option of paying a fine,—that I had telegraphed that morning to the Bank at Barberton to telegraph to a certain firm here to pay over to me the amount of any fine imposed. After a friendly chat we both had drinks together at the bar.

Smuts laughed at the idea of the war being about to burst upon us; he said that, though it was inevitable, yet he thought it would be delayed another year.

On the way back to the Peak we passed through an immense swarm of locusts, the thickest and blackest I ever came across. The sun was shining brilliantly, yet all its rays were quite obliterated. They stung us so in our faces that we had to halt as we could not face them, neither would the horses. I returned by way of Embaban, near which were some alluvial tin mines, then only recently begun, but now working on a big scale with many miles of ditches and flumes, bringing the water into them from miles away. We passed, too, a very small red-bricked house,—a small mission house, surrounded by Swazies and quite alone—where resided for years two lady missionaries; but time prevented me from calling on them.

Arriving back once more I paid my last visit but one to Barberton before the War. A meeting of the Mine Managers' Association, at which I was present, was held at the Club during my visit. The political situation was discussed ; when it came to my turn to speak, I informed them that in my opinion the war was about to burst upon us ; a roar of laughter met me ; there was a general agreement with Smuts' opinion that it was inevitable, but that it would not come for some months at least. To this I replied, " so sure am I of its almost immediate outbreak that I have to-day bought up all the canvas I can get hold of to cover my waggons and tent them over with it." I also said, that I was buying up canned provisions and hiring donkeys to pack out supplies to the mine, and that, in short, I was making every provision and arrangement to save the women and children as I intended to shut down the mine, and trek out of the country. " Mac has got the war funks," I heard on all sides. Only my friend W. supported my views of the seriousness of things. " Anyway," I said, " war funk or no war funk, I will bet you all a top hat that within six weeks we will most of us meet in Delagoa Bay."

I completed my purchases and sent out all my stores by pack-animals, not by the usual route which was by railway to Koomatie Poort and thence by waggon,—a five days' trek to the mine. Further, I arranged with W. to keep me daily supplied with all the latest news, and I organized a line of Kaffir-runners along our road out to the mine, in order to ensure receiving it quickly. The symptoms of an early outbreak were all similar to those preceding a revolutionary outbreak in Central America.\*

On my return to the mine, I immediately prepared for our expedition and got it ready to start at a moment's notice. We had in all twenty waggons and four hundred trek-oxen, besides some forty-five horses ; there were about seventy white people to provide for ; and at least a four weeks' trek before us in order to reach Delagoa Bay. Two waggons were set apart for water. The old oil drums on the mine were used for this purpose, but they were first fired and then scoured with sand, alkali, and water in order to remove all traces of oil. These were then filled up and placed ready in the waggons. The other two waggons were loaded up with oats and fodder for the horses, and two more with rice and stores for the Kaffirs. The men were to ride, while the remaining waggons were filled up with camp beds for the women and children, and with their supplies of food and baggage. A given weight of baggage was apportioned to each man, woman and child, and no more was to be

\* See *Incidents in the Life of a Mining Engineer*.

taken by them, so that everyone could save the more valuable portion of his or her belongings while the less so had to be left behind.

The camp was further divided into messes ; to each mess two or three Kaffir boys were attached, while one white woman was put in charge of each ; her duties were to organize her own helpers, to unpack stores when we camped, draw proper rations and superintend the camp cooking. Two men were appointed to the water waggons, their duties being to serve out a stipulated quantity to each mess ; then the head of the mess again apportioned it to each individual in it. Further, when only bad water was available, the men in charge of the water drums were instructed to see that they were placed on fires and that the water in them boiled. Two others were appointed to give out the horses' food when deemed necessary, while the balance of the men were given various duties—some to take charge of the Kaffirs, others to superintend the road-making, and others to guard the cattle when feeding out. I called all the people together and explained to them that it might be necessary to trek any day, and that everything was to be held in readiness, and that all should mind their respective duties.

Owing to the Tsetse fly in certain belts of the country I found it impossible to make direct for Natal. Delagoa Bay had, therefore, to be our objective ; for the same reason we had to make a détour to avoid the fly, and this involved a longer journey than would have been otherwise necessary.

My own camp was against me ; they said that, though war was coming, it was absurd to make these preparations as it would not be for months yet. I don't remember that one single soul agreed with me. I think it was generally believed that I was in a mortal "funk." The Cyanide Manager, an old Cheltenham boy for whom I had the greatest respect, was almost wild with me, and openly said that even if war were to break out the Boers would not molest us, and that he preferred to remain and take the trivial risk. One of the miners agreed to remain with him, so I arranged with them that they should take care of the property, and that their pay should continue as long as they remained on it. There was a very old man named "Jack," an old naval pensioner, who was our charcoal burner and who used to live alone with the Kaffirs ; being so old I thought the Boers would leave him alone. It was, therefore, arranged for him to remain in charge of the power station. To these three men I said, "understand you do so of your own free will, for I never ask a man to do what I am unwilling to do myself."

I had a very complete clean-up in the mill, smelted down the gold and sent it into Barberton to the Bank to be despatched at once to their branch in Delagoa Bay, with strict injunctions not to detain it under any circumstances. I had warned my friends at the Barberton Mine Managers' Association Meeting that I believed the Boers would wait for the usual clean-up of the gold mines at the end of the month, and would commandeer the gold, and that then there would be war. They paid no attention to my warning, with the result that I got my gold through to the Bay while everyone else's gold was commandeered. They argued that, even if it was war, the Boers would do no such thing, since internationally they could not; while I argued, from my experience of Central America, that—gold being the sinews of war—international law, whatever it might be, would be ignored; and events subsequently proved this to be the case. As a precaution, I sent the usual bullion boxes, but with lead bars inside them, while the bullion bars themselves were hidden in a bag of rice, and only the man in charge knew of my stratagem to guard against a possible commandeering of my gold. If the boxes were taken he was to take the train with the rice bags to Delagoa Bay himself. This proved to be an unnecessary precaution.

Then we continued milling for another six days, during which time I again went into Barberton.

One morning after my return the news from Barberton was such that I determined to close down the mine and pay off all the Kaffirs. Orders were given to clean up roughly what gold we could in the mill that night. At the same time I sent round to warn the camp that on the morrow we would trek. This news came as a thunderbolt, for all still believed that there was no immediate prospect of war; but I thought otherwise, and felt absolutely certain that it was then more a question of hours than of days. That night I sent 150 S'hangans away, with two white men in charge, to hide in a certain kloof until we came up with them later. The object was that we should not attract too much attention at the police camp, which would have been the case had they accompanied us.

Next morning a runner came in with a cable from my London Board: "On the highest authority we hear there will be no war, stay where you are." I had previously sent a cable from Delagoa Bay that I intended trekking, but would remain up to the last moment possible, and the above cable was London's reply to it. I simply replied again through Delagoa Bay, "There will be war, am trekking to-day."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### ABANDON CAMP AND TREK.

IN the early morning our camp was a busy one—waggons were being packed up and the people re-instructed as to their places in them and their various duties. At 3 p.m. we started. Two Colonials, fine types of the old British Colonists, were put in charge of the waggons and oxen. One was to be our guide, and was more immediately in charge of the bringing of our waggons into laager and of the selection of camping sites, as well as having to decide on the length of each trek. The other was put in control of the drivers and waggons, and of all precautions to be taken against theft of the oxen when grazing. Slowly the waggons were brought into line; they numbered twenty in all, and were of the Boer type. Allowing a small space between each waggon, I found they covered just a mile in length when thus drawn up.

I called in at the store and wished old Carter and the proprietors good-bye. They did not hide their contempt of me for thus trekking. It was well known in Swaziland that I had tented over my waggons, bought up food supplies, and had the intention of trekking. The last issue of the *Bremersdorp Weekly* (the only paper) had a scathing article upon my preparations, ridiculing any immediate outbreak of hostilities.

My object was to cross, if possible, the border lines into Portuguese territory before war was actually declared—for that it was coming, and coming quickly, I had no doubt whatever. The Boer preparations had continued for many months; the Bloemfontein conference had proved a failure; the Boers had trekked out early from Swaziland; the atmosphere was surcharged with symptoms of war; the first rains had fallen, and I had reckoned that within ten days of their having done so, there would be, first, active commandeering, and then war, for a certainty. I was prepared to act on my own observations and deductions. I was perfectly well aware what a laughing stock I should be to the whole country, and of the serious position I should be in with my own London Board if at the last moment war was avoided, but I had to consider the security of the women and children, and accordingly I took upon myself all the responsibility for my action in the matter.



As our road passed near the police camp I rode over to wish goodbye to the Frie-director, the head of the seventy police stationed there. With the Frie-director (by birth a Hollander) my wife and myself had been on the most friendly terms. The night before, at 11.30 p.m., he had ridden over to see us secretly. I had that day sent him an official communication that I was about to trek, requesting that, if the Boer Government had any idea of commandeering our cattle or of stopping us, they would do so before we started, and not on the road, as the latter would imperil the lives of the women and children. The Frie-director did not reply officially, but he told me there was already an order out forbidding anyone to cross the boundaries of the Transvaal into Portuguese territory with cattle. He told me confidentially that he was sending my letter to Bremersdorp on the following morning, and that, as there were no telegraph lines in Swaziland, I could probably count on a good five days' start before he could communicate with me, whatever the result of the reply from Bremersdorp might be.

It was a case of trusting a man who would be an active enemy directly war broke out, but I felt I could rely on his taking no action against us until his orders came back from Bremersdorp. The only open waggon-road in the country was that running down to Koomatie Poort—a station on the railway and some three-and-a-half days' trek from our camp, and five days' up from it; but I had no intention of taking this route, for by a little stratagem I hoped to be able to cross the border into Portuguese territory at a point where we should not be expected. If compelled to go by way of Koomatie Poort it was a certainty that my cattle, waggons and horses would be commandeered. Without his help it would be impossible to carry out my plan; I therefore confided my intentions to him. It was arranged between us that we should trek and camp a little beyond the police camp the first night, then make a very early start before daybreak on our second trek so as to get hidden from observation before the police were about in the early morning; that he would prevent them travelling during the day in our direction; and that if our move was reported by them to him, he would gain time in the best way he could. As he would have, in due course, to report all about our movements to Bremersdorp he would have to be very careful. He promised to help me all he could.

The feat to accomplish here was to make our second trek before the police were about. I said nothing at first to anyone about my plans, and then only to the two Colonials in charge of the cattle and waggons, when we camped after our first trek. If my friend played

me false I knew it would be impossible to carry out my plan, but in that case we might still be able to trek to Koomatie Poort. The only real fear I had was lest the police might "smell a rat" and compel the Frie-director to stop us, for I believed I had summed him up correctly as a real friend.

Bidding him a final good-bye I joined our caravan which had camped for the night a little way off. It was amusing, as I went round, to see how our different messes were setting about their preparations for their evening meal, and to watch the differences between them; some seemed to be settling down to their supper whilst others had barely commenced their preparations. In one or two they were already quarrelling—not a good augury—but, taken all round, they adapted themselves very quickly to circumstances. The first camp out was perhaps one of our worst, for everyone was new to the life, things could not be found, and in addition we had a gale of wind blowing so that the sand and dust permeated everything. Then washing up and re-packing was a task that was difficult in the dark, but by going round and cheering people up, it was surprising to find how good most were in doing their best and in helping to pacify those whose tempers were ruffled.

Early morning, while still dark, we inspanned our cattle and started on our turning movement. We met the boys I had sent on ahead soon after starting. In partly retracing our steps we had to wend our way a little too near the police camp to be pleasant. Slowly we pushed forward, taking every precaution to make as little noise as possible. The creaking of the waggons as they crawled along sounded to me as if they must be heard and our movement discovered. Our Kaffirs, under the guidance of some of our men, worked with picks and shovels on some of the bad points of our trail in order to enable the waggons to pass. It was dark but sufficiently light to see a short distance ahead. The women and children were asleep in the waggons, or at all events if not asleep, resting quietly within them.

That trek was longer than any of our subsequent ones; to get well clear of the police camp and into a district where we should be well hidden from view was our immediate object; our next was to gain the old road which, previous to the opening of the Delagoa Bay railway, had been the main one up from Delagoa Bay through Swaziland into the Transvaal. On this trek we got every possible ounce out of our cattle,—it was now a race to see if we could evade any attempt to capture our cattle or to prevent our passing over the border with them. We met only three or four Kaffirs

going over to the Police Camp; to prevent their doing this we employed them, ostensibly to act as guides.

Our second camp was welcomed by all, especially by myself as I had only snatched two hours' sleep, having been up with my Engineer and Secretary, with whom I was going into the re-organisation of our messes and other matters. It was necessary to make some changes in the grouping of the people, as it had already become evident that there would be friction if we did not get people congenial to each other grouped together as much as possible. This meant considerable discussion between us, even for our small outfit, as to how "so-and-so" would get on with some other "so-and-so." Then there were matters connected with the commissariat to be settled. But our night's work proved ultimately to have been a good one, for from thence on we had complete harmony. Our Governess alone was the only one who caused trouble—of which more anon: all along she had been a cause of anxiety and I specially feared that she might have discovered the Frie director's midnight visit to us. As Miss G— was a good sound sleeper I felt fairly certain she had not.

Here I will give some extracts from an account of our trek written by my wife, showing up the woman's side and written soon after these events.

"Dear —,

"As you have asked me to write you a short account of our exodus from the Transvaal, I will begin to do so now while on board the Himalaya *en route* to China. People always imagine that there is plenty of time to do all sorts of things on a steamer, there being no distractions in the way of daily papers, postman's knocks, shopping, calling, etc., but if there is plenty of time, there is very little energy to counterbalance it, and by the time one has rested after the exertion of eating bacon and hot rolls, said a few good mornings, and done two stitches of work, it is time for lunch—then comes the inevitable siesta, tea, chat, dressing for dinner and eating it, a moonlight walk on deck and a talk, and it is bedtime. That is the daily routine, but a fancy dress ball, concert, tournaments, sports, etc., occur to vary the monotony slightly. As there is neither the one nor the other to-night I thought it a good plan to begin my letter to you.

"We had, as you know, settled for a time in that part of Africa called Swaziland, or 'the Highlands of the Transvaal.' Our location was twenty-seven miles away from Barberton, the nearest town, and the only way of reaching it was by way of riding over a Kaffir track. We had three ranges of mountains 3,000 feet above sea level

to cross, and nine hills to climb up and down. A ghastly ride it was, over loose boulders, on the edge of precipices, and through narrow paths between the hills—it was shuddered at even by the best of horsemen. It often made me wonder how the wives of miners, who had as a rule, never mounted a horse before, ever arrived safely at their journey's end—by nothing short of a miracle I am sure. One nervous woman managed it under very great difficulties, neither she nor her husband had ever seen a lady's saddle before, and had not a notion what the pommels were for. First he put both her legs between them, and then as the poor thing did not feel safe or comfortable, he tried pulling them both over the top pommel. This was worse, and they never would have arrived if a friend had not turned up on the road and put the poor lady's legs in their proper place.

“It was a desolate spot enough to live in, but exceedingly healthy; there were lovely veldt flowers and glorious sunsets, everlasting hills, and lovely vales, so that it had all its compensations, and had there been no war to ravage the land we should probably have been there now. However, early in 1899, the papers began to show us that all was not at peace among the nations as it was among our mountains, and the Uitlanders' grievances took up many columns in the papers. ‘Dynamite Monopoly,’ too, was on men's tongues, and many other things, which you all know about. Then came the fiasco of the Bloemfontein Conference and things really began to be very serious indeed. The Boer papers, issued twice a week, used to fill us with alarm. But as time went on it almost seemed as if after all war would be averted. At least, most thought so, and it was even rumoured that His Excellency the President would condescend to meet Sir A. Milner at Cape Town, which soothed us for a day or two, but it was only one of those many rumours circulated just before the war. That the Dutch themselves were anxious for war both my husband and myself knew.

“At last my husband placed runners on the road, so that instead of our bi-weekly mail we got news every day. One Sunday morning, in September, our post arrived at five o'clock in the morning, with extracts from newspapers and an urgent letter from our friend in B., advising us to start on our trek immediately. It had been arranged that, if it became necessary, owing to the large number of English miners and their wives and children, we should all leave the place together and trek down to Delagoa Bay. It seemed the most feasible plan of the many discussed. This letter decided my husband to go into B. and await the mails from Johannesburg, and so get the latest news from there as to what was going on. (I

never knew till we landed in England that a cousin of mine in Pretoria, had tried in vain to get a message to us warning us to leave.)

“It was a fearfully hot morning when my husband left the mine in company with the Chief Engineer, and in the meantime we had orders to have all our heavy luggage ready. On Monday the Engineer returned with orders to cover over the waggons. These waggons are built on a Dutch pattern, and are something like a huge farm-cart and devoid of springs. ‘Cartels,’ or canvas stretchers put across the inside of a waggon from side to side were rigged up while canvas tops were placed as covers over the waggons. The occupants of the waggons sit on the cartels all day and sleep on them at night, and all the food, clothes, pots and pans are put underneath them. This of course means packing and unpacking every time we outspanned and then never by any chance is the thing needed to be found. We had orders to take enough provisions to last us for four weeks, so you can imagine what a supply was wanted. Of course they were mostly of the tinned variety and consequently bulky. What worried me most was the huge black iron baking pot, a Dutch invention which proved its use; but still it was always *en evidence*, always in the way, and its huge cover always on top of the bread or something, whereas the biscuits and the necessary bottle of whiskey could never be found, the baking powder was always lost and I generally had to borrow, the bag of flour was always at the back of the cartel and had to be fished out by a Kaffir sprawled at full length across everything, and everything else on a par.

“If anyone who reads this has trekked they will recognize the various difficulties to contend with. I made ample wall pockets and stuffed them full of odds and ends, but at the jolting down the first hill all the nails gave way and down came every bag.

“But to return to our start. My husband returned from B., and as the news was very serious he soon afterwards determined to leave, and gave orders accordingly. All day we were getting ready for an early start on the following one. At six o’clock our waggons stood at the gate, but not until 3 p.m. did we really move. Never was there such an accumulation of goods to be got into so small a space. There was baby’s bath, baby’s bottles, baby’s food, baby’s case of condensed milk, baby’s toys, baby’s basin, baby’s clothes—a no small item—and the baby herself, the most awkward thing of all to stow away in a waggon; P.’s goods and chattels; my husband’s things and mine; and last of all, thirty days’ provisions, tins and tins of tongue, beef, peas, fruit, jam,

butter, baking powder, and six tins of pepper; why we took so much pepper I never could make out. I think we must have had an eye to preserving skins *en route*; then there was wine, whiskey, gin to warm the insides of our dusky, thirsty Kaffirs; bags of rice, potatoes, sugar, flour and beans; cooking utensils, frying pan, gridiron, saucepans, kettles (best beloved of pots); eight large loaves; crockery, knives, forks, spoons, linen, sheets and towels (we never rose to tablecloths)—and all these multitudinous articles had to go in a space of about thirty square feet. At last our waggon stood freighted, and a sneering bachelor said he had never seen such untidy waggons in his life, but then he had never “trekked” for dear life with a baby as we were prepared to do.

“Then the procession started. Seventy-four precious souls to go through thick and thin, twenty waggons, 400 oxen, forty horses or more, dogs, Kaffirs, donkeys, mules, cows, cocks and hens (to die *en route*, and they did die, but by heat apoplexy, not through violence), a cat, babies galore,—and how our baby shrieked when the huge lumbering waggon jolted over boulders as big as rocks on the sea shore! It was a dreadful ride that first afternoon, we were thrown from side to side unmercifully, and the eighteen oxen in our span plodded on wearily—each always goes as if he were Atlas supporting the weight of the World on his shoulders, and five miles an hour is their fastest pace. The fore-looper and the driver shout all the time at the top of their voices, and as long as they keep shouting the oxen keep going, but not otherwise; they use a huge whip, yards in length, which generally descends on the back of the worst ox, who is usually named “Engleeshmon.” We looked like a circus procession winding over the hills, the pageant stretching a mile in length.

“At last, when night fell, after a three hours’ trek, we outspanned for the night, and a great business we always found it. First a detachment of Kaffirs went to search for water with which to wash up, then a batch went after firewood. These returning, a fire was lighted and our friend the kettle placed upon it. The stew pot, bake pot, and frying pan were then called into action, and our weary hearts cheered by the pleasant sounds proceeding from the fire. Provisions were then placed on the ground, and P. put to watch that no hungry dog carried anything off. Our beautiful mugs—‘beautiful’ with regard to size only—were soon filled with tea and coffee, and then the tongue, *par excellence* attacked. We always found our tins of salt, pepper, and mustard well adulterated by sand, and travelling behind eighteen oxen, we got plenty into everything. The dirt and the dust were our two worst enemies.

Our table was never 'elegantly appointed,' as they say in novels. It was generally a scramble, for as a rule we had only two hours' outspan for cooking and eating, and at night we were so tired we didn't mind details.

"We—that is, P., I, and the baby—shared one cartel, and I always found his legs in the wrong place, sometimes on baby's face, often on the pillow. Besides ourselves in our cartel, there was a second one at the back, occupied by the Engineer's wife and two children. So that it was very stuffy when the tarpaulin was pulled over at night. My husband slept on a low 'kattrie' beside the waggon when we were outspanned, and when we were on the high veldt he envied us our stuffiness.

"It is wearisome work trekking day after day, sun, rain, dust, heat and discomfort every inch of the way. One can so well understand what our troops went through from lack of water, for that was our great difficulty. Sometimes the water was like ink and sometimes it smelt so that even the Kaffirs turned from it. We had two waggons with eight or ten large drums on each, and these were filled up at any place where there was passable water, which was then boiled. It was afterwards doled out to each waggon, sometimes only a kettleful, so baths were out of the question altogether, nobody ever suggested such a luxury. Indeed, we really never had a bath all the time we were trekking—and even to 'wash all over' was hard. I remember one night, when our allowance had been a kettleful which had all been used up for tea, I stole an extra tin jugful for washing purposes. It became known, for first my husband, then one of the men, then P., all had a drink, which considerably lessened the quantity. Then Mrs. B., my waggon companion, sighed for a little drop to wash in, and with great generosity I gave her half a tin mugful and kept the other half for my own use.

"We descended from the high veldt to the low veldt in an afternoon, the contrast was great from the cold breezy heights to the low steaming hot flats. We arrived at a small Kaffir trading store kept by an Englishman, who died a few days afterwards. It was a desolate little brick house with a few trees and shrubs, and in one corner the 'graves of the household,'—only four, but with roughly hewn crosses over them and rose bushes. He gave us some cabbages and tomatoes and then we inspanned and saw him no more. We were obliged to trek night and day for fear of the Boers, who, although they would in all probability have allowed us to go free, would have commandeered our horses and oxen, and then we should have been stranded on the veldt.

For over a week we journeyed in fear and trembling and began to get reconciled to the trials by the way. I remember one night having crossed the Umbulosi River; it was pitch dark and rain was falling in torrents. We managed to get some eggs and bacon fried, and then all crouched under the waggon huddled together like gypsies, the lantern flickering, and the Kaffirs bending over the fires which tried to burn, looking like dark shadows. After that, one bright sunny morning we crossed a broad, shallow, slowly-flowing river, and very pretty the whole effect was as waggon after waggon wended its way through it, the Kaffirs tucking up their breeches if they were fortunate to have a pair on and wading through, while the donkeys and horses turned to drink and the dogs splashed joyously through, followed by those of us who were on horseback. It is a picture that will always remain in one's memory.

"We then camped under some trees near a second store, the last in Swaziland. Here we got some fresh milk, and here, too, our runner overtook us, bringing the mail which had arrived after we left. I had my treasured home letter, and several others which were indeed cool waters to thirsty souls. There was one from the British Consul telling my husband in an ambiguous way hostilities were imminent. Altogether we felt relieved that we had started on our journey. The Barberton paper sent out told us war was inevitable. After giving the storekeeper a book I had, and thanking him, we trekked on. I remember it was just by his house that, when we were once on a hunting trip, we saw myriads of locusts. The sky was black with them and they kept dashing into our faces.

"Another week brought us to the boundary—or the supposed boundary—between Swaziland and the Portuguese territory, on the top of the Lobombo Mountains. Here we had a bit of a fright from five or six Dutch policemen moving about behind rocks, and it looked very much as if we should be detained, when we began to feel very nervous. However, they did not stop us and on we went, and when the last waggons passed the boundary stone, there was a cheer from the men. The police had disappeared and we were unmolested.

"Oh! the top of those Lobombo hills. How desolate they were! Two small Kaffir stores stood on our right and broke the long horizon. They, I believe, comprise the diocese of the Bishop of Lobombo, for there really is a bishop of that designation, and, oddly enough, we met afterwards a cousin of his going home on board ship. Here we outspanned, for our oxen were done up and



so were my Kaffir boys. They were notwithstanding very expeditious in getting lunch and then in 'washing up.' After lunch, my husband with some of the men strolled across to the store for news, and I retired to sit on the cartel and read 'Consuelo,' a tome which lasted me all through the trek! P., as usual, seized the whip and flourished it over the back of an imaginary turbulent ox called 'Engleeshmon.' The Kaffirs, with innocent airs, came to me to know if they might 'Forgash Inkoosicas?' 'Forgash' meaning a walk and 'Inkoosicas' what they called me. I, as innocent as they pretended to be, said, 'Oh, yes! Only be back in time to get tea, Cherry' and went on with 'Consuelo.' Presently in came my husband. 'Where are the Kaffirs?' he remarked. 'I hope you have not let them go to the store. You know that we are no longer under Transvaal laws, and that they can get as much gin as they please.' No, I had not known, but down went the tome and off went I with another woman after my erring black sheep! Arriving there I found both my household servants very far gone already. I fixed a stern eye on Cherry who was executing a queer *pas de seul* and told him to go back at once, then watched my friend as he dined off. Maschia explained he was on his way for water and seized a bucket. I watched him down the hill, and was just then joined by my husband who had come after his flock. Our waggon driver was helpless and so were several others. It was really a horrid sight. We entered the dirty little store and bought some ancient acid drops, more I think for the sake of buying something than for the excellence of the goods.

"The next morning, finding there was not enough water for the oxen, my husband went off reconnoitring, and soon returned, saying that half-an-hour's ride would bring us to a pretty, well-watered place, and also that there was a small two-roomed hut, which he had rented of a Dutchman for £1. Here we thought we might stay until matters were settled one way or the other. The little hut boasted a kitchen with a stove, a verandah and a shelf or two in one of the rooms. We then unpacked the waggon, and stored our goods in various parts of the room. Taking the cartel out, the carpenter put four stumps under it, and there was a beautiful bed. Clean sheets and pillow cases made it look most inviting, and my poor husband had at least two nights' rest while we were there.

"It was near here that an adventure befell me, for, chancing one night to take an evening stroll with one of the Company, we missed our way and wandered for two hours without seeing or hearing a trace of our camp. I was awfully frightened, and in fear lest our candle should not last in the lantern, we coo-eed till we were hoarse,

and must have wandered miles, until at last our calls were answered by my husband, and presently a line of lanterns on a far-off hill greeted us, and soon we were escorted home. It gave my husband a terrible fright. Oddly enough, I had not thought of the only danger which had alarmed him, namely, that of being carried off by lions.

“ We spent the next day in washing our clothes, and a pretty sight it was to see all the Kaffirs down by the stream in a small wood full of flowers, surrounded with white heaps and chattering away like monkeys, using, too, bars and bars of soap. The only way they rub is with soap. It amused me to think we were sheltering ourselves in a house belonging to a Dutchman, who had sent away his wife to be in safety. But we were not long before the Portuguese official, Capt. de Silva, called, and rather unsettled us. Then at 7.30, before breakfast, the Dutch Surveyor-General of the Transvaal was announced, and he greeted my husband with the remark, ‘ You know of course that you are not in Portuguese territory. We claim this and I am here to settle it.’ This was a friendly hint, of course, and my husband was not slow to act upon it.”

## CHAPTER XIV.

### STILL IN FULL FLIGHT.

“ IN fact, that very afternoon, everything was packed up, and at four o'clock we started again. Our clothes were dried, but not ironed, but that is a mere detail not observed in trekking. Just as we were starting a young Boer arrived upon the scene ; where he came from I never quite made out, but he most kindly volunteered to show us a good camping ground where there was plenty of water. He also displayed a lively curiosity as to how many guns we had and what quantity of ammunition we carried. After we had gone a little way one of the mules got loose and tore off. The Boer volunteered to go after it, and certainly he rode magnificently, returning in triumph with the mule.

“ Day departing, we outspanned on the top of a hill, and each commenced their usual avocations of preparing supper. My husband was like a general commanding his forces, and each man had his appointed task. One pitched the tents, another distributed water, another looked to the welfare of the horses, another did the same by the donkeys ; the carpenter looked to the axles, dussel-booms and wheels of the waggons, another saw to and appointed the night-watch, another arranged the waggons in laager and saw that everything was inside it. The drivers, after watering the oxen, brought them back and tied them each into his own place in the team, so that none strayed. I know one night I nearly fell over one. My work was to see to baby, bathe the little thing on the veldt, see that her food was properly made and her bottles washed, and get her to sleep. My sweet son always did his own dressing and undressing, and I never had a grumble from him the whole way. Every day I gave him a bottle of boiled water for his own delectation and he never wanted more.

“ On this particular night an extra watch was closely kept on our friendly Boer. The next morning he said he must depart early, but care was taken that he should hear the orders for the day issued. They were, to do one short trek and wait at the bottom of the hill for a waggon which we heard was behind. Needless to say, as soon as he was out of sight the real orders were given to the effect that we were to do three treks that day, getting well away. Afterwards we heard that he really was a spy sent to find out our strength and to learn how many guns we had. A letter he dropped

out of his pocket was picked up. It was authorising him to do this. We heard that the Boers were mad that they had been unable to commandeer our waggons and cattle.

“We passed some magnificent scenery and marvellous trees, but my favourite trees used to be the gorgeous Kaffir bloom, one which flowers in the Spring, with rich red blossoms, no leaves, and with curiously white mossy boughs; and its flowering is the sign for the Kaffir women to begin planting. We heard baboons in the hills, and we saw a few Buck, a few Pau, and one or two Korhan. We came to one weird, uncanny spot which I wish I could describe to you. It was in the fever zone, and my husband said, ‘do you see the fever trees, once seen those trees are not easily forgotten.’ Long, dank, leafless boughs, like skeleton arms stretching out for victims! Trunks covered with a pale sickly yellowish green slime, horrible to touch, like the feel of a snake, I fancy. They stand out one from another, tree after tree, in the curiously damp warm atmosphere. Tortoises crawl about on the spikey grass underneath adding to the gruesomeness of the whole scene, which is like a cursed spot, and although the men of the party were longing to stay—for game was plentiful—I begged my husband to push on.

“Before starting, I had just time to prepare a batch of scones made with baking powder, and commit them to Cherry’s tender mercies and very black hands to bake. I used often to wish he was not quite so fond of patting them to see if they were done.

“After leaving the fever country we came to a very pretty spot on the edge of a wood, with such lovely ferns and flowers, and then went on again through a narrow gorge with a curious pond seemingly cut out in rock; at least rock was all about it. We heard baboons answering each other. We saw palms with balls of brown vegetable ivory dangling from the top, and we came to a tiny new-made grave, that of a little child of a store-keeper who had passed through here. The name and date were cut out on a tree and it made me think of Livingstone’s lonely resting-place. Another day we spent in riding through low scrub with masses of exquisite starry white flowers with a stephanotis scent. Then we passed queer-looking trees laden with Kaffir oranges, and, like everything else Kaffir, a most untempting looking fruit. I just tasted one of these nasty sour things with a rind as hard as a nut.

“We also visited a Kaffir kraal and I would have liked to carry off a sweet little bird-cage made of sticks. We bought a curious sort of root which Cherry cooked in hot ashes, and being cooked in its skin we could eat it in comfort, feeling no dirty hands had messed it about. By and by we were but a couple of day’s journey from

Lorenço Marquez, that 'land of promise' to us poor trekkers, though in my youth from geography books I had been taught that it was one of the most unhealthy places in the world, and alas ! I have since had cause to believe it true.

" It was at this stage that two men, whom my husband had sent on to scout, returned, saying that it was impossible for waggons to get into Lorenço Marquez. The two bridges we should have to cross were broken down—the Red Sea and Jordan!—and we poor fainting pilgrims could hardly rejoice at such news. Then the bush had grown up all over the track, and huge trees stood in our way. However, as there was no going back we must go on, and so pioneers with axes were sent on in front, and trees were hewn down remorselessly. You can imagine that with this extra work our progress became slower than ever ; but never mind, it was progress notwithstanding. It was also pleasant to feel that our journey was coming to an end. However, when we did arrive at the torpid, stinking river there was no bridge at all and seemingly no ford. The stench from this evil looking water was so bad that the Kaffirs even shrank from it.

" 'Necessity being the mother of invention,' and it being impossible for us to remain on the wrong side, there being no miracle performed on our Red Sea, heads were put together, and at last every man set to work cutting down a sort of willow growing on the banks and throwing it in piles to form a foundation for the waggons. We who were riding went across first to watch proceedings from the hill. Our interest was somewhat tinged with anxiety, and I said to the carpenter, 'Mind you get my waggon across safely.' I could see the two little figures on the cartel, and heaved a sigh of relief when our huge domicile safely crossed without swaying a bit. It was not so with the last waggons, for of course the impromptu foundations had sunk down. The waggon with the Mine-Captain's wife nearly had a smash-up. It was almost over and she screamed lustily, but luckily a double team of oxen and many willing hands righted the wrong, and finally all were over and were in the far outskirts of Lorenço Marquez.

" Another day's long trek till eight o'clock in the evening through pretty woodland scenery brought us to the top of the hill, and there, far away, we caught a glimpse of the sea, and some low-lying land which we were told was Lorenço Marquez. We were up early the next morning, at sunrise, or, rather, before the sun rose, and everything looked lovely through the summer haze. My husband went off before us to find a resting-place, and after a very messy breakfast I donned a clean blouse, resumed my dusty old riding

skirt, and mounted. Our waggon being the big Baas' led the way, and by-and-by the long white road broadened and seemed more full of traffic than heretofore. By-and-by we came to a little corrugated iron Kaffir stores, and Kaffirs and Portuguese began to multiply on the road. We remarked how the donkeys were loaded with huge wooden panniers on each side, with the owners on top of them, plodding the poor little beasts along. It was quite an excitement to see shops, and I longed to buy, though there was nothing but Kaffir truck to purchase.

"But before we came to these I must not forget to describe the fatal bridge across our Jordan; it was a wooden erection on very substantial supports, but most of the flooring was rotten and gone. What was to be done? The 'Baas' had gone on to see the Governor-General, and the head carpenter, after a good deal of scratching his head in perplexity and stumping backwards and forwards over it, began to carry out his orders, namely, to take up one side and patch the other, it being amply wide enough for the waggons to go over on one side, but not until the floor planks of two of the waggons had been added to it. Everyone went to work, and in half an hour the baggage-waggon was sent across as a test. The bridge stood it well, and a cheer from the men went up. But I took my precious two off the cartel to run no risk.

"Well, there was 'no more ribber for to cross.' We had reached our promised land, and on that very day, the 10th of October, war commenced. We were in safety and most of our possessions with us. But, alas! for the many who had left farms and homesteads and cattle. We camped for the last time in a low-lying, fever-breeding meadow, but there was nowhere else suitable. We sat about and rested, a tent was erected as a bath-room, and we really felt refreshed after a thorough good wash for the first time. I prepared a menu for a leisurely dinner—I forget what it was, but I know tongue, as usual, figured in it!

"Late in the afternoon I was sitting by my door, Abraham fashion, when there was a galloping and jingling, and two strangers dashed down the decline. Portuguese officers in full rig, no end of swells, and riding magnificent horses, their orderly behind them! Our men met them, and by signs and gesticulations it was understood that they wanted to know if we were Dutch come down for ammunition, but on being informed we were English flying from the Dutch they wanted to know all about us, how many we were, the number of our oxen and horses, and even cocks and hens. This was all jotted down, and then a miner said in a casual way 'have a drink.' This was at once understood, and they did not consider it at all

derogatory to their uniform to drink a glass of whiskey offered them by they didn't know whom.

“Later in the afternoon my husband returned to say we could only go in by way of the back of the town, but not over the macadamised road—nor when we arrived could anyone stay in the waggons, all must immediately find house-room. There seemed no end of difficulties, and early the next morning the last trek was inaugurated. We tidied ourselves up as much as possible. I am sure I brushed my skirt until my arms ached, but it was not much improved—the dust was ingrained into it. Never shall I forget the heat of that day. The hot, sandy road, where the oxen's hoofs sank deeply in, and made progress a matter of difficulty; the steep weary road with little tin houses on each side; the noise of the drivers' shouts urging on their tired beasts. At last we reached the top with the noon-day sun pouring down upon us, and then to our astonishment we were stopped at the Portuguese Barracks, where the officer said he had no orders to let us go further; he said he would telephone to the Governor-General, and meanwhile would the ladies come in and rest, and his Kaffirs should water the oxen? We thankfully dismounted, fetched P. out of the waggon, and entered the cool, well-ventilated officer's quarters. Here they brought us water, and so deliciously cold did it look, sparkling from a well, that despite warnings against Delagoa Bay water, we thoroughly enjoyed the refreshing draught. After some time a message came that we could go on, but must deliver up all fire-arms. This necessitated a good deal of ransacking among the waggons, for everyone's precious gun was carefully hidden away, my husband's was secreted in a log of wood hollowed out and slung underneath our waggon.

“It was not until four o'clock that we started afresh around the hot, dusty, unhealthy town up to a hill outside it called Reuben Point. Here we unpacked the baby, and all four of us left the waggon for ever, and went off to the big new hotel, called the 'Cardoza.' We just managed to secure a room, and thankful indeed we were to feel four walls around us, and a big verandah outside. The others of our Company my husband planted in a large empty house where they camped, and the waggons stood empty in a field.

“So ended our flight from Boer vicinity, and I do not feel as if I should ever care to return to Africa. It is a land of fair promises, but little else at present, and time will show whether English settlers will render it more profitable than Boer trekkers have ever done. Time fails me to tell you more of all we witnessed while

we were in Lorenço Marques waiting for a steamer to take us home. We saw the trains from the Randt bringing in the refugees, and the sights were some of the saddest I have ever seen. One day three trains arrived and emptied 1,200 homeless, penniless people on to the platform from Pilgrim's Rest, and I saw our Consul's wife leading troops of drooping women to the refuges provided later on by the Mansion House Fund. Mrs. Ross met every train, her care never failing, and bread and butter and tea were distributed free to everyone."

Before continuing my narrative of our experiences I will go back to certain events in Swaziland, and elaborate a little on my late wife's description of our trek out of it. After we had actually started on our first trek I rode back to see the Cyanide Manager to try and get him to let us take out his battery of guns, dogs, and two trained sporting horses, for I felt certain he was placing too much confidence in his friends the Boers; but it was all to no purpose. I reluctantly bade him goodbye and caught up our caravan. At the last moment a brother of the miner who was staying behind with the Cyanide Manager decided to stay with him.

Three days after we left, the Boers rode in, and, as I predicted, took all the guns, dogs, and horses from him, and to add insult to injury, made these three men march on foot behind them across Swaziland into Carolina, and thence all the way to Pretoria, where they arrived just six weeks afterwards. There they were thrown into prison along with Kaffirs, but eventually were put into some cattle trucks, sent down to the Portuguese border, and cast adrift on the veldt in the clothes they stood up in. The two brothers eventually died from fever, but the Cyanide Manager reached Delagoa Bay and subsequently managed to get a very good rifle of mine from the Portuguese, who had taken it from me; with this he hunted for Beltong (dried buck meat) during the war, and supplied our troops with it. At the end of the war, so fascinated was he with hunting that he gave up his own profession and took to that of freighting goods through the Low Country up to the Peak mines, which gave him the opportunity of sticking to the sport he loved so well. The last I heard of him was that he enjoyed the life, but was looking as yellow as a guinea, so saturated was his system with malaria. The climatic conditions of the Low Country for five or six months of the year are as bad, if not worse, than those of the West Coast of Africa or Panama.

In the extract quoted above, my wife makes a brief allusion to a hunting trip of ours and of seeing a cloud of locusts. It was



when returning and coming up on to the high veldt that we saw what we then thought was an immense grass fire, for heavy, dense clouds of smoke were apparently going up in great volumes along the crest of those hills. As we approached them, the smoke, as we thought it, turned out to be one of those inconceivable flights of billions on billions of these huge grasshopper-looking creatures. We had spent a fortnight with a friend and his wife in the Low Veldt, chiefly hunting the blue Wildebeest (Gnu); and a very enjoyable time it had been—the only holiday I took in those two years.

Two incidents occur to my mind connected with it. After having tracked up a herd of these odd-looking animals from 6 a.m. until 3 p.m., we came upon them. The Kaffirs had spooed them, and a wonderful sight it was to see them, as they kept pointing out the spoor (track) with their assegais; many a time I got on my knees to look for it, but could not even perceive the faintest trace of it. But their trained eyes, as they walk at a moderate pace, are able, with unerring certitude, to follow these marks when tracking. Coming within sight of a herd we lay watching them for some time; there was a wide open space between us and them and no cover to get nearer to them. The wind, too, prevented our working round to their flank on the only side where there was some possible cover. So we went back, held a council, and decided to try and ride them down.

The boys brought up our horses which we had not mounted during the day and which were therefore fresh. Mounting them we slowly rode forward; as we came in sight of the herd, the old bulls, which were acting as sentinels, quickly gave the alarm, and they started on the run. My friend's horse, for some reason, got unmanageable and he had to pull up. Gradually I was gaining on them, riding almost on a parallel line to them, and began to edge towards them when my horse commenced to lose ground. I then started firing from the saddle; so intent was I on them that I never noticed a big acacia tree under which my horse took me. What happened I don't know but I found myself on my feet with my rifle still in my hand! That I had been swept off the animal was certain, but I had no recollection of receiving any blow and had no bruise about me. The tree was one of those very thorny ones, with thorns which grow to six or seven inches in length. It was a marvel I was not even spiked by one, and it always remained a mystery as to what really did happen. The ride was a glorious race as long as it lasted, and to this day I can picture that herd tearing madly along, looking not unlike a troop of miniature bison.

Returning to camp we arrived a little before dark to find my wife and her friend busy cooking us a good buck meat supper. Thus they used to be left alone all day, with a few Kaffir boys, and with no anxiety about their safety on the part of either of us. Of these Kaffirs, as I have already pointed out in my first book, much is to be said in their favour, and of the trust we placed in them.

A waggon had gone by during the day with a surveyor and his wife, also on a hunting trip. Shortly after leaving us they came on a Rhinoceros lying right across their road. The lady begged her husband not to shoot it, so afraid was she of its charging them. They got behind the waggon and threw stones at it, when it quietly got up, and seeing the oxen near by, turned and went off into the bush. Next day we tried to spoor him up, but our Kaffirs decided that he had got too much of a start and had gone off on a steady run. As we had to start homewards that day we reluctantly gave up any idea of following him.

That night our two horses broke away and were out all night. The two dogs we had brought down with us were sick with fever and we lost them both. Three days afterwards our two horses showed signs of horse-sickness, and in four hours they were both dead. As they were "unsalted" horses our loss was not a big one, but we attributed the cause of the disease to their having got loose that one night.

The two women thoroughly enjoyed the trip, which was my wife's first experience of an African one; and for myself, even the remembrance of racing alongside those almost demoniacal-looking animals, was an experience well worth the trip—even if we had had no other adventures—and is one that I often recall to mind.

On this trip we came across the honey or bee-bird, a bird that keeps calling to attract attention and leads a man by its short flights from one tree to another until it stops on the one where a bee-hive is to be found. The Kaffirs were quick to point out the bird and to follow it up, coming back laden with small gourds full of honey combs.

To return to our trek; before we had reached the Lobombo mountains or hills, I received a letter by a Kaffir runner from our Resident, Smuts, at Bremersdorp; he asked if I could detach one of my waggons for him to help him get away, as the Boers had refused to hire one to him; he told me, too, that the Boers were actively commandeering, and that war was a matter of a few days only! I could not possibly spare a waggon; we were already too fearfully overcrowded, and to send one away would have caused a mutiny. Later on I met Smuts, who meantime had obtained

a waggon, and at the time of the receipt of his letter was already well on his way and ahead of me, together with the editor of the Bremersdorp paper, a little beyond the Lobombo ; but only having a couple of waggons between them they trekked on for Delagoa Bay, leaving us to come on. It was a little more than a fortnight since they had laughed at my idea that the war was almost upon us. Already the Boer police in Bremersdorp had plundered the large English trading store in that town, throwing out all its contents to the Kaffirs. For two or three days they were so engaged and over £30,000 of stores were looted for the benefit of the Swazies. In fact, I think from all I subsequently learnt that this was the first overt act of War.

The crossing of the border already referred to was a somewhat more serious matter than my wife had any idea of—as also the crossing of the “ Red Sea ” and “ Jordan,” so named by her ! We arrived at sunset at the base of the hills on top of which was the boundary line between the Dutch and Portuguese territories, but this line was disputed, and a commission was even then camped on the top of these hills with representatives from both Governments, endeavouring to settle the dispute. I was most anxious to cross that night, but the oxen were too tired to make another trek. The ascent was a steep one and over two miles long, and with tired beasts impossible to make, so we camped for the night.

Just after sunset, and while still fairly light, a mounted Kaffir rode through our camp, greeting no one and galloping away up the hill. This looked suspicious for it was probable that he had been sent out as a scout to report our numbers. That night, for the first time, we posted armed guards around our camp. At daylight I sent three of our men, the Secretary, the Engineer, and a mine-foreman to scout up the hill with injunctions that one of them should come back if they had anything to report. Taking with them a few Kaffirs off they went ; after about two hours one returned stating that they had seen two policemen pass behind some large boulders, so riding up and dismounting I crept up near to the spot where our two men were hiding and watching. On coming up to them they reported that four police had been seen, so we lay watching for another hour when a fifth was spotted coming down to join the others. How many more there were we could not say.

Returning to the waggons I called all the men together and put the case to them. If we were held up, were we to submit quietly or should we put up a fight ? If only six or eight police showed

themselves, all agreed we must attempt to force a passage. Fire-arms were distributed to every second waggon and hidden at the tail-end under a blanket, and behind each of them the men were distributed. If the police held us up boldly we reckoned all would be well as we would show fight. If they held us up hiding behind rocks we were to appear to give in, but some men were to creep off and attempt to outflank the police and get behind them, while others of us would be parleying with them. I thought it not wise to deploy ahead of the waggons as we should then have to go armed, which would have put the police on their guard.

Inspanning we slowly crawled up the hill. Coming up to my scouts they reported that the five police we knew of were behind a certain big boulder, and that they had seen no more ; so the word was given for the waggons to come boldly on, and as we came abreast of their hiding-place not one showed up, and soon afterwards we crossed the old boundary line and a little beyond camped near water. In the afternoon some of the men went back and found the five police, who were watching this boundary line, and who, as it turned out, were afraid that we should attack them as we were such a large party. They said they had been recalled to Bremersdorp and were leaving on the morrow.

Next day a party of our S'hangans, who had dawdled behind, came into camp, bringing a policeman's saddle, Mauser rifle and revolver, also a cartridge belt. Their story was that the police had met them in the road and attempted to commandeer them and take them back to Bremersdorp, whereupon they had run away ; but one policeman had followed them ; him they pulled off his horse and disarmed, and very likely killed, for there, anyway, was the proof that something had happened. It turned out that the ground we had camped on was "no man's land," or that in dispute. Van V., the Dutch Commissioner, who was very friendly, gave me the tip to move on as some Burghers were expected and there might be trouble about my oxen.

As my wife said, the news about the two bridges was disconcerting. It was not, however, my own men who brought me the news, but a Kaffir messenger sent out by the editor of the English paper in Lorenço Marquez, who, having heard we were trekking down, had sent him out to let me know that the old bridge had long ago rotted away and that no waggons could possibly get through. Coming to the first, or the "Red Sea," there was scarcely a trace left of it. We held a council and it was suggested we might be able to make a floating bridge, and, as there were plenty of light willows and tall grass, it was decided to try it. For hours all hands

were busy cutting the grass into tightly wisped bundles, and placing them as a matting across the stream with a layer of willows to keep them together ; then came another layer which the Kaffir boys trampled down, then another and another layer were laid on top, and the oxen and horses were used to trample them down ; and finally the waggons were hauled across empty, and as each waggon crossed over a fresh layer was laid down. All having crossed, the business left was to carry all the waggon stores over and reload. As we had nearly 200 boys it was not so formidable a task as it looked. That night we camped, all highly satisfied with our success. On both sides of the narrow stream were wide and deep swamps, so that we had to depend entirely upon this bedding of floating grass to act as a bridge.

The second day we came to the " Jordan," across which was the old bridge ; the arches of timber and upper beams were sound, but there were only a few planks that were not rotten. Sufficient planks were found to make a broad enough pathway for our horses to cross by. Later when the waggons came up, the cattle were led across, and then the Kaffirs pulled the waggons across after first splitting the pathway into two with the help of a few planks taken from the bottom of some of our waggons ; thus the " Jordan " did not prove so formidable an obstruction as we expected.

Going ahead with my Secretary, we called on the Governor-General, asking his Excellency if there were any formalities to be gone through. He was very amicable and told me there were none, save that he could not allow us to go through the town and that we should have to go round by the back of it. As no Boer waggons had been seen in town for many years it would be too great a sensation, with several thousand refugees crowding the streets ; it could not be thought of. Nevertheless, as my wife described, we were stopped at the Barracks, and did not get our last waggon into our camping ground until long after dark. Our oxen that night were so done up we could not even drive them eight miles back for water. I shall always remember the Messageries Maritimes Agent here, on account of his great kindness, for he it was who offered me a field for our camp, when it looked as if we should have to camp far outside the town, and he also put a very large empty house at my disposal for my people, at a merely nominal rent.

Our arrival made quite a sensation for no such outfit had been seen here since the days before the railway, as the Governor-General told me. Having deposited my wife and two children in the Cardoza Hotel, I returned to fix things up generally and get

some supplies in, for we were just running out of them. Two Lieutenants rode up at 9 p.m. and informed me that my people must get into houses that night as they would not allow them to remain in camp. I told them to get soldiers to carry them as they were too tired to move, for it had been one of the longest and hottest day's work of our long trek. Riding off to report, they promised to return at 10 p.m.; this they did, coming back with a permit which allowed my people to remain for that night only.

At 11 p.m. I got back to the hotel, having been in the saddle from 4.30 a.m. to 11 p.m. with only one hour's rest at the Cardoza, and having tired out two horses, for at the Barracks I had to go back to see about two waggons whose oxen had given out. So ended our trek to Delagoa Bay; next day I got all our people comfortably camped in a fine large house near the Cardoza; and thus a load of responsibility fell from off my shoulders. All were in good health save two of my men who were really bad with malarial fever, and (strange to say) these two men were the two chief culprits in drinking any filthy water on our way down. I regret to say that some of the children of the Colonials with us died during that winter from Malaria. All had submitted to the discipline of the camp and there had been no real trouble, with only one exception—and that was caused by our Governess.

She resented being put into a waggon with women whom she considered below her in status, and she insisted on bringing her little pet fox-terrier into their waggon, a dog fond of barking. I received a deputation stating that it was impossible to put up with her presence in the waggon as she made herself as disagreeable as she possibly could. I informed them that they must settle their own disputes and had better appoint a Committee of some of the women from the Camp to see what could be done. I heard that some kind of ultimatum was given to her, what it was I refused to hear, as I pointed out that I had left the matter entirely in their hands; but the difficulty was shortly solved by our coming on a Boer waggon near the Lobombo when the lady decided to go off in it. I afterwards heard that she reached Pretoria and was working there during the war on behalf of the Boer Government. To give the lady her due she was an accomplished woman and always pleasant and agreeable in the house. We never had any personal disagreements with her. She travelled much in Europe and was of an artistic temperament, and between my wife and herself there was much in common. Her one fault outside her renegade opinions was the way she looked down on anyone she considered inferior to herself.

Before dismissing the episodes and experiences of our trek I will briefly refer to the one in which my wife described her friend and herself as having lost themselves one night, and myself as having got a great fright; and it was perfectly true I did. She did not know the real cause of this at the time, but it arose from the fact that one of the two traders on the Lobombo had a few months before lost a little child of four years old. The child was sent by her mother to her father who was in the adjoining store, and he, giving the child some sweets, sent her back to her mother—but from that time she was never seen again. It was subsequently found out that she had been carried off by a Kaffir medicine-man and killed in order to extract some supposed medicine in the eyes of a child with “white blood” in her veins. Coming back to my waggon after dark and not finding my wife, whom no one had seen, and then finding that another woman was missing, I was naturally filled with alarm; so I organized a number of men with lanterns to deploy out within calling distance of each other. We advanced on a long line to search for the truants; when over a mile away from camp we came upon them. They had gone for a saunter and had taken a lantern, as darkness was coming on, fearing nothing, and wishing to get a little way out to have an hour’s quiet away from the camp. Losing sight of it, they suddenly got nervous and started back, as they thought, but instead were actually going away from it. But “all’s well that ends well,” and so I felt when they were found and brought safely back again. My wife was much amused afterwards when she found a certain Kaffir always following her; on asking him why he did so, he replied, “the Baas had told him to keep guard over the Inkoosecas.” This I had done unknown to her for she was so fond of going off to explore around, that, notwithstanding her fright, I was still alarmed lest she might again lose herself, for it was an easy matter to lose direction amongst the acacia scrub country we were then in.

In her description of those sickly yellow and weird looking trees—“fever trees” as the Kaffirs call them—she omitted to give an incident that occurred while we were camped here. Our eight or ten different messes were all sitting scattered about at our mid-day meal, when a large buck sprang up right in the middle of us and bounded across the open; a young fellow who was only out from home a few days before we left the mines picked up a rifle and fired right across our heads; but he shot the creature, and was so forgiven! As it turned out, that was the first time he had ever fired a rifle and his shot must of course, have been a fluke. His

brother, who had been in my employ, afterwards joined me in Korea, and from him I learnt that the young sportsman joined a regiment in the war, but died afterwards from fever. Several of those who trekked out with us, subsequently either lost their lives or were wounded. One of them, after receiving eleven bullets in his body, was able to return to the field a few months later, but this time got shot in the knee which permanently disabled him. T.R.—who was at one time South Africa's best bat—came out with us, and later on went right through the war without injury. Our doctor (who did not accompany us) died later in Natal.



## CHAPTER XV.

### 10,000 REFUGEES IN LORENÇO MARQUEZ.

DELAGOA BAY, or more properly Lorenço Marquez, is a town well-situated with a well-sheltered and deep harbour fronting it. From the Cardoza windows a fine view of the Bay was obtained. The hotel itself was well-placed on prominent high ground with an outlook superb of its kind after the veldt country. It proved, indeed, to be a harbour of refuge during the few weeks we had to remain here; it was a well-constructed building with large airy rooms, but it was badly managed. A huge heap of empty cans just in front of our windows was a veritable breeding-place for mosquitoes. The building was situated just on the confines of the town, and near by was our employees' house, which had been a large boarding-house.

Next day the waggons were all off-loaded and unpacked, while I sent back the cattle some ten miles and left them in charge of a squatter at rs. per head per month. Our horses, mostly belonging to our young men, were stabled in town, and our camp settled down awaiting developments. I cabled to the General at Pietermaritzberg, Natal, in charge of transport, that we had twenty waggons and four hundred trek oxen, offering to lease them to the Government at market rates provided they would ship them and would insure them against war risks. I received a cable in return agreeing thereto with the exception of the insurance terms. I further cabled that twenty-two or twenty-five young men (most of whom knew the Kaffir language or the Taal, etc.) offered their services with their horses, but I received a reply that mounted men were not wanted. Arrangements were then made with the local butcher to take our oxen gradually for slaughter at a price above what they were entered at in our books. The waggons later on were shipped and sold in Natal.

A dear little old lady turned up on the day after our arrival—she might have been one of Dickens' characters, of very early Victorian style. She asked to see me privately, and my wife coming in just then, she insisted that her interview was of a very confidential nature and could only be with myself. Her story was that her husband had been a caretaker at one of the Johannesburg mines, and that she and her husband had remained behind after

the general exodus of the Uitlanders, when one morning three police walked into her "parlour" without even knocking at the door, and not one of the three removed his hat. This she repeated more than once, and it appeared to have caused her more resentment than their request for her to go direct to the railway-station to be sent out of the country! Her husband came in then and they were both hustled off, just in the clothes they stood in, and put into cattle trucks along with other people; and had thus travelled all the way to Lorenço Marquez. But this journey, terrible as it must have been, appeared to have left much less impression on her mind than that of the police having refused to take off their hats in her own parlour. She explained to me a little more about themselves and it so happened that I knew about them through one of our own people; a very worthy couple they were; but the confidential communication was—could I find them temporary quarters with my people? To this I readily agreed, but the poor little lady, on learning that our house was close by, and a long distance from the wharf, nearly broke down. They were, she said, waiting for a steamer, and if one came into the harbour they might lose their chance; she would sooner sleep out on the wharf than risk such a calamity. A poor, frail little thing she was and looked as if she ought never to have left her native village. Money they had received from the Bank through their Company's Agent here, but money would not buy quarters for them near the wharf. Those two had slept for nights out on the hard stones of the wharf so fearful were they of losing a passage by an incoming steamer. My wife got a cup of tea for her which revived her, but her disappointment was great for she had heard I had secured a house overlooking the wharves, and so she had journeyed out to see me.

Going into town, what a sight met my eyes! thousands of women and children were standing about—ten thousand, our Consul reckoned, was about their number. These constituted refugees from Johannesburg, mostly the poorest of the poor, who, on account of their poverty, had been unable to get away until the Boers cleared them all out by putting them in cattle trucks and sending them down to this place. A terrible journey it had been for them, and a few had died on the way. Water was in many places refused them, and their sufferings had been great what with the heat, dust, and want of food and water. Thousands had nothing more than the clothes they had on at the time.

The great question, was how were they going to be fed? A Committee had been formed under the auspices of our energetic Consul, and everyone who had money, or could command it, had

given liberally. A number of empty rooms had been hired and in these the women and children sheltered, lying on the bare boards at night, while the men had to camp out. To make matters worse, the first rains were just beginning; the fever season usually starts with their advent, so unless the refugees could be got away the outlook was a bad one. Bread and butter, or the Portuguese "Manteca" (more a kind of lard than butter), coffee and tea, were distributed at certain centres to those who had no money to buy food elsewhere. Even with this scanty provisioning our funds were rapidly diminishing. The Committee sent cables to Durban, Maritzburg, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, and to the Lord Mayor of London; also to our Government, asking that the empty troopships then lying in Durban might be sent up to take them away; but no satisfactory answer was received. The position was getting desperate.

At last a final cable was sent to London that all further issues of food supplies would cease in two days from that date, when food riots would certainly break out, and that a conflict with the Portuguese soldiers would inevitably arise. Fortunately this time our cable crossed one from the Lord Mayor of London, remitting, I think it was, £5,000 with a promise of another £5,000. It arrived opportunely as we could give no more, our resources having become exhausted. Two German steamers came in after the receipt of this cable and were chartered by the Committee to take as many refugees as possible at £1 per head to Durban. Never shall I forget the rush to get on board the first one; the decks were crammed, and as she steamed out through the Bay the waves were sweeping in great sprays over that densely packed throng; but all were so nearly mad to get away that they would have gone through any hardship to effect their escape. Then more steamers arriving they carried the remainder away.

During this period I brought my wife down one morning to the station to see the people who were reported to be coming in from the Pilgrim's Rest districts. As the train appeared we saw crowds of people standing in open trucks, and all so black with dust, they looked as if they were Kaffirs dressed up. The scene on the platforms as they got out of the trucks was distressing, for most of them were in a very exhausted state. These poor people had received permits to remain in the Transvaal, as most of them had been born in the country, and had spent their savings in laying up hoards of food. Suddenly the permits were rescinded, and twenty-four hours given them to clear out of the country, and their little wealth of whatever sort had to be abandoned.

During all this time the spirit of the refugees was really grand and we felt proud of our countrymen. There was no weeping and wailing, their constant enquiry was "is it going to be another Majuba-hill, another Gladstonian 'give in' to the Boers." "If it is going to be a fight to the end," we used to hear the women remark, "well, we don't know how we are going to live or get through it, but somehow or other we won't be beaten." This was their spirit and suffering as they were—badly fed, badly housed, and with no beds—a really fine one. Our great difficulty was with some of the women who looked upon the gratuitous giving out of food as a "workhouse piece of business," and a bitter pill it was to them to be compelled to accept it. The Committee used to talk to them in the strain that "it was war, and in war-time there was no charity in giving them food; no more so than it was to give food to the army."

During our stay here we were mainly engaged in helping to alleviate the distress, but some amusing episodes occurred in the midst of it all. Our engineer, for example, who was riding a horse passed by some Portuguese troops when he should have pulled up. For two days he was missing and all enquiries failed to elicit his whereabouts. The last place in which we thought of looking for him was the prison, but there, nevertheless, we found him. He had not been allowed to communicate with anyone outside and was waiting to be brought up before the magistrate. By the help of the Consul we succeeded in getting him out on payment of a small fine for breach of the regulations. His horse had disappeared but was traced and discovered; someone had had his eye on the animal and the arrest had evidently been made in order to capture it.

In prison he discovered a well-known engineer from Johannesburg who had been there ten days. His story was that, on arriving at the station from Johannesburg, he had left his wife and two children on the platform while he went into the town to find some place to take them to. Going into a saloon, he partook of two glasses of spirit on an empty stomach, and was overcome by it to the extent that he refused to obey a gendarme's order to move on, and was promptly arrested. This man was rescued on payment of a fine, but when his wife and children were sought for they could not be found anywhere. What the end of his story was I never heard.

There were many similar cases, but, taken on the whole, the Portuguese gendarmes behaved exceptionally well to our people.

In the midst of all this human misery—for it must be remembered that the majority of the people were living only on bread and coffee

and were hungry—it was amusing to hear some of the women's remarks on the Portuguese butter, or "Manteca," with which they mostly refused "to soil their lips for they had not come to that pass." It was, too, interesting to see that some of them still had a pride in their children's dress and how they sought with bits of ribbon to make them look a little smarter than the bedraggled garments of the others.

Their days were long and weary ones, for few knew what was going to happen to them ; but all the same, as I said before, their spirit was magnificent and we heard very little grumbling from them. The true old British spirit had fired up, and that amongst a crowd of the poorest of the poor of Johannesburg's recent population, where one least expected to find it.

At night, under the flare of electric arc lamps, some ships lying in harbour were being unloaded and heavy guns landed from them and that with two of our gun-boats in the offing watching. The ships coming in were bringing in them the off-scourings and adventurers of Europe, who were landed without any signs of arms ; but on the Lorenzo Marquez railway-station the same crowds stood waiting for trains going to the Transvaal armed with Mausers and bandoliers filled with cartridges. The Portuguese were, I think, in the position of neutrals, who, although not sympathising with the Boers, feared that Delagoa Bay might be taken from them ; they undoubtedly believed that the Boers would win, so they shut their eyes to what was going on for fear of making enemies of them.

Having arranged for my people, most of whom had secured berths in ships that had arrived during the last few days of our sojourn here, we had to make up our minds whether we would go *via* the Cape, and stand the discomfort of a voyage in a ship which would be overflowing with passengers, or by way of the East Coast. Against this latter route was the fact that plague had broken out in Madagascar ; we decided that it was better to risk plague than the discomfort of a voyage *via* the Cape with two children.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### HOME *via* MADAGASCAR AND EGYPT.

THE S.S. *Gironde* of the Messageries Maritimes was sailing for Diego Suarez, Madagascar, and on this boat we embarked with our friends from Barberton, the W's, who had agreed to accompany us home. At Diego Suarez we were told that we would have to tranship to another of the Company's boats. On going on board we found to our astonishment that we were about the only first-class passengers. We had hired an Arab girl to act as nurse to our baby; already this wee mite of some fifteen months had had nurses of three different nationalities—namely, a Zulu, a Swazie, and a S'hangan; now an Arab was to make a fourth. This Arab girl had been a nurse to a family here; they had brought her from Cairo, and as they wanted to return her to her people, the opportunity suited both parties and was, as we thought, a god-send for us. But no sooner had we sailed than she went down with a bad form of bilious fever.

As we bade good-bye to South Africa it was with no regrets; those two years spent there had been eventful ones and not unhappy, save for the accident to my boy which has ever since cast its cloud around. Of the Boers we saw little, but what we did know of them, especially of the educated Boers, we liked; they were simple people, obsessed, like the Irish, with all sorts of ideas of our Hun-like treatment of them. Though hating us as a nation they never appeared to have any resentment against the individual Britisher. The one characteristic of all Boers seemed to be the way they looked upon the Kaffirs much as they did upon their horses. Cases of their cruel treatment of the Kaffirs were not uncommon, but on the other hand the Kaffirs remained very faithful to the Boers; this was proved in the war where especially their own immediate Kaffirs stuck to them.

Our Governess, who had been in a Boer family and had lived amongst them, used to tell us dreadful stories about her experiences of them, but I never put any faith in their truth, as she was probably endeavouring to hide her pro-Boer sympathies. But if even half her stories were true the Boer temperament is a cruel one. My own experience of them was little, but I speak as I found them—of a simple nature and responsive to polite treatment.

Only one characteristic in the poorer Boers was pronounced and that was their want of sense of anything approaching to truthfulness, and for no reason or object that I could divine.

At the Peak we were always on friendly terms with them; for example, a little before we left there we arranged to hold the usual annual sports to which they came, but the Friedirector asked me, in view of the political tension between us, not to hold them that year. I then called a Meeting of the Boers in our district and frankly put it to them whether they thought it might lead to trouble, or whether we could hold them as good friends. "If we hereafter have to fight each other," I said, "there is no reason why we should not take this opportunity of wishing each other good-bye and good luck." The voting was unanimous to hold them. Horse-racing was always the principal event with them. Accordingly two days' sports were held. On the last evening at a "sing-song" given by our men one of them proposed the "Soldiers of the Queen." It looked as if the fat was in the fire, but not so, for to the surprise of all, the Boers not only joined in but sang it lustily.

Returning to the narrative of our voyage. While the shores of South Africa receded from us as we stood on deck, I am sure that each one of us pondered, as I did, over coming events. That it was going to be a long war I was satisfied; I was equally certain that we should be beaten at first; at all events we realized that "horses were going to win,"—for this is how it was put by the old Colonials who laughed at the idea of infantry being of much service. Their idea was to raise a Colonial mounted force on Boer lines and beat the Boers, man for man, at their own game, fighting after their own methods. The above was the current stated opinion amongst the old Colonials (of whom there were many in Lorenço Marquez), and especially amongst those from the Pilgrim's Rest district who had lived and been brought up amongst the Boers. The same also was true of the old Colonials from the Carolina district—quite another district, and far distant from that of Pilgrim's Rest. I think their idea, more fully expressed, was that there should be a well-organized system of raiding parties acting quite apart from the main force, and that the latter should be used only to hold the Boers up.

At all events those few days spent at Delagoa Bay were memorable ones as showing the spirit of the Britishers, and of the Colonials; all were full of patriotism, all expressed these sentiments under conditions of great privations and with little hope that they individually were going to survive the period of the war. Among the Colonials the opinion was unanimous that the War was not

going to be a short one, for it was realized that the Boers were "out for" the supremacy of South Africa. Van V., my Lobombo Boer friend, came into the town before I left it, and he and I had a very interesting exchange of views.

The day after we sailed was a calm, lovely, and sunny one; the quiet thud of the engines and the peacefulness of our surroundings as we sat on deck on comfortable madeira chairs lulled us to sleep; I think the four of us slept most of that day, if not all of it. The third day we arrived off Beira, and we took a walk ashore through the town. Here we remained a day, and then after two days, arrived off Mozambique, where we also went ashore for a couple of hours; both places were sandy and inhospitable-looking. Another two days out and we arrived at Diego Suarez, Madagascar. No case of plague had shown itself for eleven days in the little town, and it was hoped that they had seen the last of it. We waited on board for the S.S. *Irrawaddy* and sailed in her on the 6th. In transshipping from one steamer to the other my wife went on in a small boat with the small son and the sick Arab girl, while I undertook the baby and seeing to the luggage. There were a large number of French officers, privates, and some Soudanese soldiers—invalids—returning home. Amongst the latter I found a Corporal who took charge of the baby for me whilst I sought some missing baggage. On coming up from the hold of the ship, where I had been seeking for it, I found my orderly had disappeared and with him the baby. I was told that he had gone over to the *Irrawaddy* and on my arrival there my wife exclaimed "Why, you have forgotten the baby!" Some English women near were heard to exclaim, "Why, look at her, she's a nice sort of a woman to talk of forgetting her baby as if it was a brown paper parcel." But the baby was on board. My Corporal made a good nurse and used to walk for hours up and down the deck with the baby in his arms, but he too went down with fever and a French soldier offered to take his place, and right up to Suez the latter was scarcely ever up on deck without her. She was, too, a great favourite amongst the soldiers, being such a happy laughing baby.

Diego Suarez had the reputation of being a very healthy station on the coast until water was brought into it by a pipe laid from a point a few miles distant; from that day malarial fever became very prevalent. We can now understand the reason for it, but it was not understood then; the water brought with it mosquitoes and they bred in the pools.

Calling at Aden, we spent a day ashore and got our first news of our then recent disastrous actions with the Boers. We called



in next at Djibouti, a French station, where the railway built by them runs to the Abyssinian border. Soon afterwards we passed Perim, and later on went through the Canal—which was of great interest to my wife, for it was her first view of it.

We anchored off Port Said where most of the homeward-bound passengers went ashore, while our small party sat and chatted with the Captain until they came back ; then we prepared to go ashore intending to spend a few days in Cairo. Bidding good-bye to the Captain we started off for the town in one of the returning shore-boats. The steamer, as we left her, slowly began to churn her screw and was soon on her way home, leaving us far behind ; but on attempting to land at the quarantine-station a sentry prevented us ; we tried at other points but were always stopped by one of these guards. “ What could it mean,” we asked each other, for the passengers from our steamer had been allowed to go on shore and why were we debarred from doing so ? The sea was choppy, my wife was sea-sick, and at last we rowed up into the canal to get shelter. It was a bitterly cold night, our wraps could not be found, and I had to take off my only coat and wrap it round the baby. A miserable night we spent until 5 a.m., when we attempted again to land, but were refused. I managed, however, to send a note by the sentry to the Port Doctor, but there was no reply until 7 a.m., when we were signalled to come in. The Port Doctor met us, said our baggage must go to the quarantine-station there to be disinfected, but finally agreed to let us land without further trouble.

The solution of the mystery proved to be that the day before grand festivities were held in honour of de Lesseps, whose memorial monument had been unveiled that day. Many distinguished guests had arrived from both France and England for the ceremony. The Port Doctors had gone off to the Dinner given that night and left no one in charge of the quarantine-station, at which we had vainly appealed to be allowed to land. It was a scandalous affair, but as visitors there was no redress to be obtained, and so we had to make the best of things. The fact remained that we had spent a very bad night in an open boat, and had experienced an extremely cold one, because we had been taken by complete surprise and our wraps were packed away in one of the trunks ; our conception of the climate, even in this latitude in its winter months, was one of only genial warm weather.

I shall not attempt any description of our visit to Cairo, where we spent a few days, which we thoroughly enjoyed. The weather was delightfully bright and pleasant. Of course we made the

usual "globe-trotter's" round of visits, including that to the Pyramids. The manager of the hotel engaged an Egyptian nurse for our baby, who strongly objected to her long black veil; but she removed it in the house. I looked up an old friend of mine, Pasha C., and together we went over our earlier days, when he, as a young man, returning from Sedan where he had been during the Franco-German war, used to recount his experiences, and I as a young lad devoured them. Later on in life, his brother, Colonel C., who was killed in the Black Mountain Expedition, had been a great friend of mine; so we had much to talk about. Unfortunately the Pasha had only returned to Cairo the day before we left for home.

From Alexandria we crossed to Marseilles. Again our baby had a fresh nurse, for a French stewardess who happened to be returning from the East on a holiday was engaged for the child. Arriving home, we parted with our good friends the W.'s. Here we spent a month in our home at St. Leonard's; during this time our baby had yet another nurse, this time an English one and the only English nurse she ever had. Later on she had an Ayah, and Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Amahs, but the Chinese one remained her principal and most faithful nurse. Such are the vicissitudes which the wife and child of a Mining Engineer have to go through! Just after my arrival at home, when I went to my Club, and, meeting a crowd of members there, told them that in my opinion the war was going to be a long one, they roared with laughter; so little did we at home realize what the task before us then was.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### RETURN TO THE FAR EAST.

OUR next trip was to the East. Leaving England once more by way of Dover, my wife, baby, Ayah and myself journeyed to Marseilles, and there went on board a P. and O. boat. To my wife's horror we found that the nice large cabin which we had engaged by the plan of the ship was exactly opposite the second-class cooking galley, and the odour of fried onions filled our cabin with their perfume! I first of all discovered that there were some four cabins unoccupied and then went to the Purser to ask for an exchange; but this gentleman refused on the plea that they were taken by passengers expected on the boat at Suez; so we had to put up with a most disagreeable cabin. At Port Said and Suez no new passengers came on board, nor did I believe one word of the excuse given, and after we had passed Suez I told the Purser so. He then offered to allow us to change into one of the spare cabins, which condescension I refused to accept, but I told him instead that for the future I would take the German line. At Colombo we had to change into another of their steamers; by the German line this would have been avoided.

We arrived at Hong Kong after the usual voyage out, a very pleasant one in all other respects, for the boats were well-appointed and very clean and there was no cause for complaint. At Hong Kong we took up our permanent quarters on the Peak, which was to be my headquarters. In the Peak Hotel, a fine building with a nice wide colonnade verandah, my wife remained comfortably ensconced during most of our first year.

For some reason our baby did not like the Ayah, the first nurse for whom she had ever shown the least dislike. On board the steamer some of our passenger-friends had watched the girl's management of the child when we were absent, but they all reported that she was most kind to her. We, too, liked the girl ourselves but not so the baby and that settled the matter. In London it had been agreed that if I paid a second-class passage out to Hong Kong for the Ayah the Company would give her a free passage back to Bombay, if I wished to send her home within three months of my arrival in Hong Kong. A few days after our arrival I called at the P. and O. Office and notified them of my intention to send her back

by the next home-going boat ; no objection was made : but, when two or three days afterwards I took the girl down to see her safely on board the outgoing steamer, they refused to take her because plague was reported to have broken out in Colombo. On going to the office they point-blank refused to refund me the expense of sending her by another line, or to compensate me in any way on account of this expense. I had, eventually, to send her to Calcutta by an Indo-China Company's boat, and across India to Bombay. The girl was terrified at the idea of going alone across India.

The kind of action described above on the part of the P. and O. Company's servants explains why the German mail boats were so patronised by people in China in preference to the P. and O. steamers. It was a common saying in China that the P. and O. only catered for their Indian passengers, and that passengers for China were always given the second place. The P. and O. had a very bad name ; being a very patriotic subject I hated to go by the German mail, but after my treatment by this Company I never but once used their ships again, and that only on a short voyage. I mention this with no idea of hitting back at the Company, but only as an example of how we lose our trade through our own insular faults. Later on, when going to Japan in a German steamer, the first question asked me by the Head Steward was if we were comfortable, or if we would care to change our cabin for another one.

I stayed a few days at Hong Kong preparatory to making a journey into Fukien Province to examine some mineral concessions beyond Amoy. On my journey down the coast we called in at Swatow, a very closely-packed Chinese city, dirty and uninteresting, and built on a mud plain. The only mode of passenger-conveyance was in one of those Chinese wheelbarrows pushed by one man, who, as he goes, skilfully balances as many as six passengers in it. I have seen even more than six carried. Three passengers sit on one side and three on the other, back to back as in an Irish outside car. As the barrow is pushed along the wheel squeaks and creaks and by its noise acts as a horn does on a taxi-cab, warning all foot passengers to get out of its way.

The few days' voyage to Amoy was made chiefly along the coast-line, and all kinds of junks and queer-looking Chinese craft were passed. As most people know, the junk is high up in the stern and the bows low in the water, while the rake of the mast is forwards and not backwards, as in our ships. If the junk has two sails, one bigger than the other as in a lugger-boat, the small sail is placed forward and the bigger behind—the reverse of what we do. Again, in rowing, the men face the oars and push them from them, and not

as we do, pull them to them. A pair of enormous-sized eyes is painted in the bows, one on each side of these boats, and these are supposed to give sight to the boat.

The approach and entrance to Amoy harbour are very fine, and after Swatow the impression created on one's mind is that of delightful Chinese surroundings. The Island in its midst is occupied by the European community and is studded with numerous well-built houses and bungalows. These, with its trees and foreshore of various hued boulders, give a picturesqueness to its harbour, covered as it is with numerous and strange-looking craft, that is difficult to describe. My object in writing is not to give any real descriptions of places or towns, save in an accidental way, as there are so many well-written books on China, and so many persons far better equipped to do so than myself, but rather to confine myself principally to my own personal experiences and to incidents and glimpses of places visited in my travels as they appeared to me.

Amoy, if properly described, with its charming little harbour and scenery and its large Chinese town, might well fill a volume in itself. Here I stayed a few days with my host and hostess in their well-built and commodious house. Both of them were charming personalities, but little did I think at the time what the result to my host would be of my visit to a certain mineral Concession on which I was about to report ; to him a good report meant his very existence as he was in financial difficulties and a sale of the Concession was the only chance of extricating himself from them. On my return from the expedition he showed no signs of anxiety to hear the result ; on the contrary, at dinner that night he appeared to be in the best of spirits, and we did not in any way refer to the subject. Next morning we had a business interview, and when he learnt that I could not uphold the sale of an unproved mineral concession on anything approaching his terms he never turned a hair. Soon afterwards I sailed for Hong Kong with no idea of the severity of the blow I had given my kind host and hostess. We parted the best of friends with all good wishes showered upon me by themselves, and never a shadow entered my mind of the tragedy then impending. On my arrival in Hong Kong I learnt my host had shot himself. As events afterwards proved, his affairs, as already stated, were in a hopeless tangle. This tragedy cast a gloom over Amoy where he had lived for years and where he was looked upon as a successful man of business. His widow was reduced from affluence to dependence upon her own exertions for a living. My report, however, much as I might have wished it to have been other than what it was, could not have been altered.

Many other times in my life have I had to dash, by an adverse opinion, the hopes of those I had known as friends and also as strangers, and quite openly I have been offered heavy inducements to colour my reports, though I am glad to say such cases have been quite the exceptions. It will be seen that the Mining Engineer has often to face problems of great difficulty, as for example when he has to give his opinion fearlessly, well knowing that there may be a chance or chances against its being a correct one. Still, when reporting, he is engaged for *his* opinion, and has to give it free from bias and without seeking to hedge. If he does this, and his opinion is based on experience I maintain he will prove right nine times out of ten ; but if he seeks to hedge and play for safety he is not worth a " tinker's cuss."

During my stay in Amoy I made a journey into Fukien—the province in which Amoy is situated. I had as companion a Formosan merchant, a delightful Englishman, who had spent many years in China and Formosa and who spoke not only the official Mandarin language, but the patois spoken in Kuansi and Kuantung Provinces. He had recently lost his wife and was going home on a trip when I met him, and he there and then volunteered to accompany me. His knowledge of the Chinese character was intimate, and from him I gleaned a store of information about them. He was never tired of interpreting for me, and, unlike most interpreters who endeavour to give one the gist of a conversation, sought to translate for me as literally as possible. Day after day and often far into the night he never tired of doing this. Though I had in the past employed many Chinese coolies in the Malay States, I had not until this time the least idea of their human sides, in fact I looked upon them all as wily " heathen Chinese," and thought that it was impossible to get at their inner nature.

They now became to me intensely interesting, and, without being egotistical, I believe I got during those few weeks a better insight into their human side even than many of those who have lived for years in the Treaty Ports. Indeed, I have since often been dismayed to hear some of the opinions expressed by these men on the Chinese ; they still look upon the coolie class as so much scum fit only to be kicked.

Although during my trip we were still in the winter months the glare of the sun experienced on our marches was intense. I remember making one such march over the hills lying behind Amoy. All the morning we and our coolies toiled up a long ascent to the pass at the top of them through ground covered on their slopes with huge granite boulders. Through these we wound our way,

but the heat radiated out from them was so great that our coolies burdened with loads, though accustomed to be thus turned into beasts of burden, gave out and refused to go further. Not a drop of water was to be found, but soon after midday we gained the top of the Pass, where we found an old Buddhist monastery; just before reaching it I espied a small trickling stream of water away on my right, and immediately turned off to go over to it to get a drink and wet my head. My companion, more used to the country than myself, counselled caution, and on closer examination we discovered that the stream was issuing from the foot of a small cemetery, whereupon my cup of cool, clear-looking water was turned into one where, to quote Scripture, "there is death in the pot." In the monastery we found the same stream issuing from a rock—its real source—and we both drank and cooled down our heated pates by pouring gourds filled with its cold water over them. The old priest, the head of the monastery, was most amiable and told us about its history, (which, although forgotten now, had quite an interesting side to it), and also about the people in the villages beyond; so far as I remember his narration had to do largely with robber attacks upon the monastery.

Here we had to wait until very late for our coolies, who had broken down, to come up. Continuing our journey that night—a bright, stary one—we wound our way down the hill-sides until we arrived at the village for which we were making, where we put up in a farmer's house.

Food in the south of China has rice always for its basis, beautifully cooked, and every grain separate and pearly white without a brown or black speck of any sort on it. Little dishes with relishes are served with it, such as onions, spices, beans, but almost always well seasoned with red chilies, and often little savoury tit-bits of meat. To handle the chopsticks is no easy matter for a foreigner, but with practice it is as easy to pick up a grain of rice with them as a spoonful; the coolies, however, usually used their hands by compressing a small ball of it in them and then throwing it into their mouths. In the South of China, where rice can always be bought, the food question is easily solved, and not much in the way of European stores need be carried. A few bottles of curry-powder, some tea and sugar are really all that are required. A chicken curried and a bowl of rice and sugar after a heavy march or a hard day's work is eaten perhaps with greater relish than a good dinner at the Savoy or Piccadilly. One could, therefore always travel in light marching order, save for a camp bed, tent, and a few tools and blasting materials.

The farmer's house was a well-built one, and the roof, like most Chinese roofs of a heavy tiled structure, was slightly concave on either side, and ornamented with bright yellow and green tiles, with ornamental glazed china figures, as "Kylins," on the ridge of the roof. From here we travelled on across paddy fields wending our way along the top of their mud walls in a single file. These walls are not made in long straight lines, but are broken at frequent intervals or built on a curve. The Chinese always avoid anything like a straight line; even their telegraph poles are not put up straight but leaning at all angles; the reason for which is that the evil influences (Fenshui) travel in straight lines, and so breaks or curves are made in order to switch them off. In the same way an entrance to a house has a wall or screen of some sort built in front of its entrance in order to prevent the devils or evil influences entering it.

The women working in the paddy-fields espying us, would try to take short cuts and get ahead of us, in order to obtain good views of the strangers—for naturally the "foreign devils" were a rarity to them. In their neat butchers' blue coloured clothes the southern Chinese have a cleanly appearance compared with their poorer and more northerly kin, who but too frequently appear in rags and tatters. The people in my journey in Fukien seemed to be prosperous and contented.

When we entered a large village one night they did not receive us too well and were somewhat sullen. My friend said: "Just wait until I get them on the laugh and we will get all we want out of them." Then he began to chaff them and to tell them they ate too much rice, too many chili peppers and looked more like overfed rich mandarins, and so on in similar strain, and soon he had them all laughing; whereas before they had said that they had no accommodation and that we had better go on to the next village, they were now all discussing which was the best house for us! Finally they came to the conclusion that an old temple partly used as a barn would make, if cleaned out, a nice place for us. In a short time the temple was cleaned out, handed over to us after it had been swept, and joss sticks burnt before the altar to propitiate the God of War, its Patron Deity, for their neglect of him of late.

It was already dark, and a weird sight was presented inside with the great figure of the God of War, at all times represented as grotesque. Here we put up our camp-beds, and after a frugal supper such as I have described, we undressed and turned in; all of this was carried out in public before an admiring crowd of men, women and children. There we lay smoking, while my friend interpreted for me the conversation going on between him and



them. It was, so far as I remember, and as on most of these occasions, on the subject of their welfare. How the rice was looking, or what sort of rice harvest was their last one. How many pigs they kept, and how often did they have a pork feast? What sort of a magistrate had they, was he a good man, or did he "squeeze" them, that is, extract heavy taxes from them? And so on. Falling asleep, we awoke in the morning to find the same crowd looking on as if they had never gone home to sleep. Then our ablutions, and our shaving in particular, interested them immensely. They wanted to examine everything—our clothes, shaving brushes, tooth brushes—and it required no small amount of ingenuity on the part of my friend to explain to them why they should not do so. It was bad luck to touch a foreigner's things, and this would often be enough to warn them off.

Then after a light meal we sometimes sat and listened to some story of a household quarrel, and were often asked to pass a judgment on it if we stayed in the place for a few days. Cases of this sort were not only very amusing, as giving a better idea of their inner lives, but proved the truth of what my friend used to say, "if you win their confidence they are different beings from what the average European thinks them to be." They are simple people easily won over, though steeped in superstition and ever living in fear and trembling of evil influences. Their language, it is true, is coarse and foul to our ears, but can this be wondered at when we consider their environment and the little or nothing there is to brighten their lives spent in toil and hard work. Although, as I have said, I was not a stranger to the Chinese, yet my friend's patient tuition as to their lives and manner of conversation gave me a real insight into them which is vouchsafed to few without a mastery of the language.

On my return to Hong Kong I found that my wife had been most hospitably entertained by the heads of my firm and introduced to new friends, and that she was quite enjoying her Eastern life with experiences so different in all respects from those of her times in South America and South Africa. Her stories of her experiences with her Chinese washerwomen and house-boys were most amusing. Our old Chinese Amah who remained with us about three years was quite an old dear of her sort. The baby was quite at home with her. At first my wife found she was always having to change the washerwoman or her house-boys; when the secret came out, it was found that this was all due to the old Amah's manœuvring, as every newcomer gave her a present, "a Chinese custom," or in other words, commission.

It was always a pretty sight to see the healthy, rosy English children of the well-to-do who lived on the Peak, with their Amahs and native servant-boys in attendance upon them ; they took their daily stroll, or sat about on the benches along the roads—much as English nurses may be seen doing in the parks—in clusters, with the children playing round them, while they recounted to each other the daily gossip. In the town below where the English children of the mechanics and soldiers were quartered, their pale little anæmic faces formed a strong contrast to their more favoured little kin living away up in the clouds above them ; for the lower town, or Hong Kong itself, is at all times hot, humid and enervating

The town and the Peak are connected by a rack-railway line, and in going up or down it, as one sits in the car and looks out on to the houses below, they have every appearance of being tilted over, a curious kind of optical delusion. The view seen of the deep blue waters at its base reaching across to Kowloon on the mainland is superb, the shipping on it looking more like little toy or model yachts than real ships. The walks along its summit are well-graded, broad and railed in, for often they surmount the tops of retaining walls, built up as if so many miniature precipices.

A very sad fatality took place about this time. A lady well-known to my wife lost one of her two little boys by a fall over one of these walls. Their Amah had let them climb along the wall on the outside of the railing ; suddenly a gust of wind took the boy's hat off ; he was seen to grasp at it and to let go his hold on the railings ; then falling some forty feet, he was killed on the spot.

A humorous incident was that of a lady friend of my wife's, who lived in one of the houses in the terrace built at the back of the hotel ; her Chinese cook-boy coming in one day announced in the pidgeon English spoken by the house-boys, " Missie, no can cook." " Why," she asked him, " you no can cook " ? The answer came, " One piecee lady live. No. 2 house (that was the house next her own), she goee lockee door, no live more, no can cook." What did he mean ! The sequel proved that the next-door neighbour had gone away, the house was left empty and locked, and he, the cook-boy, could not get in to cook her meals, where for the last two years he had been in the habit of cooking them. In the lady's own kitchen there had never been a kitchen range. As she had never been into her own kitchen she never knew until then that her meals had all this time been cooked in that of her neighbour.

These Chinese cook-boys are wonderful in the way they can contrive. I have myself taken as many as twelve guests home to dinner without giving any notice of their coming, and all I have said

to the cook-boy as I entered my house was "Twelve piecee men come to dinner, suppose you can do?" Answer, "Can do, catchee dinner one piecee time," by which I understood he could manage it if I gave him a little time. A very good dinner he gave us too—a quite impossible feat for anyone even in a large establishment at home to do; but in China the boys will go out and borrow all round (perhaps from the cooks of one's own guests) not only food but the necessary supplemental plates, knives and forks. It is no uncommon thing, therefore, for guests to recognize their own plates or silver on their host's table, and this is quite an ordinary occurrence. My own personal boy was a native of Hong Kong. After leaving there I subsequently made a house-steward of him, and he used to run the whole house, provide the food, engage the servants, keep the accounts, and remained with us for nearly three years. I had sometimes taken him on a journey with me, and have seen him turn out a decent loaf of bread made in an oven improvised out of an old kerosene tin and bake it, too, over an open fire in a drizzling rain.

The new territory on the Kowloon side had lately been taken over by our Government and I made some very interesting trips from Hong Kong over it, sometimes going by steam-launch along its shores and then riding inland. One of these trips was to examine some reported seams of coal which the Governor, then Sir Henry Blake, asked me to have a look at. We made a picnic trip out to it, but alas! the reported discovery of coal proved only to be a black coal-looking rock, or a dyke of igneous origin.

During a very pleasant stay in Hong Kong we were in treaty with some prominent Chinese with regard to certain mines in Kuansi and Kuantung, and especially one up the West-river which rises in Yunan. Finally it was arranged that I should go to Wuchow (a recently-opened Treaty-port), make that my headquarters and visit the mining districts in Kuansi and possibly Yunan, if I was able to get so far. Once more I bid good-bye to Hong Kong and started on my expedition on board the S.S. *Samshui*, a small steamer trading between this place and the new Treaty-port on the West river. As this journey covered ground seldom visited by foreigners, except by a few merchants residing at Wuchow and a few missionaries residing in three mission-stations beyond it, I will give a somewhat detailed account of my travels. No foreigners were reported to have visited those parts above the mission stations save the celebrated Lyons Mission—an industrial one sent out by the French Government some few years before.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### JOURNEY INTO KUANSI.

WE left Hong Kong at 5 a.m., and were off the entrance to the West River at midnight; it is always a dangerous river on account of the pirates who infest its mouth. The steamer in the voyage before ours had been attacked unsuccessfully, but her Captain nevertheless lost his life by a bullet. We were sand-bagged up along the bulwarks, and every precaution was taken against any similar raid. The Captain took me down stairs, and through locked iron doors we passed where the Chinese passengers were sleeping. Some, however, were smoking opium and some gambling, and the whole place was intensely hot and stuffy. A few dim lamps were burning, and I was glad when the Captain, with loaded revolver in hand, had finished his inspection, and we passed out of the horrid atmosphere. The door was shut and locked and an armed sentry left to watch that no one attempted to break the lock. Armed sentries were posted about at possible vulnerable points. Afterwards I was handed a rifle, revolver and cutlass, with a few rounds of ammunition, before retiring, and was warned that if an alarm was sounded I was to make my way to a rendezvous near the bridge. Well! I went to bed hoping there would be no alarm, for I wanted neither to shoot anyone nor to be shot myself.

Special precautions on all local steamers have to be taken against the Chinese passengers, as many times steamers have been captured in these waters by the pirates coming on board disguised as peaceful passengers. Of late these Chinese pirates have been very active and have captured many Chinese junks, even close up to Hong Kong itself. They too, had captured twenty-eight steam-launches, thirteen of which were still in their possession.

We passed several junks, many with cannon lashed to their decks—not very dangerous even if they wished to fire on anyone, for they could not be trained without first turning the whole boat round! In the morning, getting up with sunrise, we found ourselves running up a pretty river with low banks and bright green grass-covered hills in the background; along either bank mulberry plantations were growing; the trees of these are kept well cut down, and the young shoots springing up from them when seen at a distance have more the appearance of Kent Hop Gardens.

Towards evening we stopped off the town of Samshui, from which town our steamer took her name. This place has a large trade and is an emporium for the silk industry. Some of the Chinese passengers who came off carried long rolls of paper. On examination, one of these was found to be varnished inside, and sticking to it were countless thousands of silkworms' eggs. Here we passed H.M.S. *Robin*, one of the two flat-bottomed gun-boats built to patrol these waters and penetrate the mouths and many shallow inlets of the Delta.

At sunset we steamed through a narrow gorge with high hills rising abruptly on either side of us ; here the river ran very rapidly, having narrowed from about three quarters of a mile in width to less than a quarter. Before coming to this gorge we had passed, a little way back in the distance and on the left bank, a curious low range of dark-looking hills, which I recognised from their contour to be sculptured out of a marble formation, and which reminded me very much of the view seen from Ipoh, where a similar range of marble hills forms so marked a feature along the Kinta Valley in the Federated Malay States—a valley that has proved one of the richest alluvial tin-fields in the world. Little Chinese villages were frequently passed ; they looked prosperous, as most of the houses were built with the typical tiled Chinese roofs—a sure sign that their inhabitants were well-to-do. They nestled amidst great clumps of the feather species of Bamboo and formed little centres of picturesque beauty. The whole country on both banks was a never-ending picture of peaceful loveliness. As we ascended the river, the hills, covered with bracken and with a species of coarse grass, would approach the river banks, but only to recede back into the distance and then unexpectedly to approach them again ; while in the foreground, the bright green paddy fields, the mulberry plantations and lovely feather bamboo all made up a picture faintly portrayed in some of these Chinese pictures, in bad perspective, which we sometimes come across at home.

The river was a study in itself, being full of every description of Chinese craft, junks, light barges, stern-wheel-barges, sampans and huge timber rafts. These rafts reminded me of similar ones that I had seen floating down the great Mississippi river ; skilfully bound together were their countless logs, making often a snake-like bend, as one of them would come rounding a corner in the river ; they approached the Mississippi rafts in size and were often a quarter of a mile in length. On these, too, as on those, were built little temporary huts for the raftsmen to live in during their long journey down the river. Some rafts had immense stacks of brushwood

heaped up on them which so completely covered them that they looked more like immense hay-stacks floating down the river than anything else. Most of the large craft had guns peeping out, and even some of the rafts had guns mounted upon them.

The Captain thought that one or two very suspicious-looking boats were probably those of pirates. The barges—in fact all the boats—were queer-looking craft, but these in particular were very high in the stern, where the women were to be seen cooking. In the centre were stacked piles of cordwood or other merchandise, such as great stocks of Chinese hats ; while forward were eight to twelve men with long oars or sweeps, four to six a side and all keeping steady time as they swept their oars through the water. As they stood up facing the oars, or in the direction that the boat was going, they all with a bold and measured step forward pushed their oars away from them and then with a step to their rear swung them back again, just lifting their front feet slightly but without taking their toes off the deck ; this gave them a very strange, almost weird appearance as all moved forward or backward quite silently save for the sound of their feet and the creak of the oars ; and all was accomplished with the most perfect rhythm. On a slightly raised structure on top of the high stern stood a man or a woman holding a long tiller handle in his or her hand by which the huge rudder was worked ; the rudder was nearly a third of the length of the boat and reached far under its stern as well as projecting like ours behind it, and like those in our racing yachts, it was well perforated with holes. In the bow was a very long sweep which was used, only when in difficulties, as an auxiliary rudder. Others again were propelled by stern-wheelers, which were propelled by twelve to fourteen men in the upper half of the wheel, revolving it round treadmill fashion.

Having passed a second night on board we came to anchor off the town of Wuchow at noon the following day, in the midst of a densely packed crowd of small craft and sampans. We managed to find our way through them, thanks to the nimbleness and skill with which the Chinese boatmen handled their boats to get out of our way, and to the way in which they all helped each other. These boat people are a hardy lot and mostly live in their boats with their families from one year's end to another. Even on the small sampans, or passenger-carrying row-boats, which are barely large enough to accommodate a small family, this is equally true. They keep them beautifully clean and are for ever washing them down. The small children always have a life-buoy tied round them, so that if they should happen to fall into the river they are soon picked up.

The town itself proved to be a large and busy one—a kind of emporium where merchandise was being transhipped from smaller to larger craft. Here I stayed with J. M. and Co.'s agent who had just completed a new house and "Go-downs."

After a short stay we collected a few Chinese boys, stores, and necessities for our trip, and were ready for our journey further up the river to Huei-Huen, a town between here and Nanning; from Huei-Huen we were to start on our journey inland, there to visit the mining districts of that part of the province of Kuansi. Kuansi had the reputation of being the most turbulent province in China, and overrun with robbers.

A little before we started H.M.S. *Sandpiper* came in—the other gun-boat on the river referred to when passing H.M.S. *Robin*. We found that she was about to attempt the passage up the river to Nanning—the first attempt to go beyond Wuchow. The Commander kindly offered to take us on board. Each of these gun-boats carried a crew of twenty men, a Doctor, Commander, Lieutenant, some gatling-guns and a six-pounder, and drew only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet of water. As there was only one tiny cabin we camped on deck. Steaming out the next morning, we continued our voyage up the river which teemed with craft of all sorts, often making it difficult to steer clear of them.

That evening we anchored off a large town called Ting Yuen near which the river of that name joins the one we were on. The West River is a muddy-coloured one, but not noticeably so until the clear crystal of the Ting Yuen River is seen flowing into it, when the contrast between these two is most marked.

Taking a walk a little way up the latter river we witnessed for the first time the Chinese fishing with their cormorants. Seated on a raft anchored out in the river were one or two Chinamen, with a few brown earthenware jars used as reservoirs in which to place the fish. Sitting beside them were the birds themselves who, evidently at some given signal from their masters, would dive into the river. The water was so clear that they were easily discernible below its surface and could be seen diving at incredible speed. Seizing a good-sized fish in its long bill, up one would come and leisurely swim to the raft, where the fisherman would take the fish out of its mouth and throw it into one of the big receptacles. Then he would dip his hand into another and pull out a small-sized fish, giving it to the bird which would immediately swallow it. As many as six or eight cormorants were attached to each raft. Fastened round each of the birds' necks was a loose metal ring, which, we were told, was to prevent the bird from swallowing the bigger fish.

We espied coming towards us along the river bank a big flock of duck, all waddling along homewards as fast as they could ; there must have been at least two to three hundred of them. Behind them walked two small duck-herders, each with a long thin bamboo cane in his hand with which he whipped any laggards. I had never heard of duck being driven along like sheep, and it was a very curious spectacle, especially as the lazy ones seemed to know what they were in for if they did not keep up with the others. A talk with these boys corroborated the stories one had heard in one's boyhood of the last one in of an evening always being soundly whipped. They were driving them home from the river, and, on asking them if they did not lose them, they said, " No, the ducks know each other and they know, too, when it is time to start back for home."

After the heat of the day the blue-jackets on board were allowed to go overboard and were the amusement of the Chinese boatmen passing by.

The following morning we were under way at daylight, for at night we always had to anchor ; as the rocks and rapids were unknown we could feel our way slowly up the West River only during daylight. During the morning we reached Tai Wong Kong, a large and important city. A Chinese town is always dreadfully dirty and fearfully smelly—so much so that it is better not to describe one in detail ! This city was no exception, but after paying a visit to the Yamen, where resided the Chief Magistrate, we took a ramble through it. The silk bazaar was most fascinating ; we did not find, as expected, rolls and rolls of beautiful silks, but large open sacks (much as are seen in a corn-chandler's shop at home filled with grain), filled with silk cocoons. These were of all shades of yellow and of different qualities, and it was amusing to find how two sacks of what, to our unpractised eyes, looked exactly the same both in quality and colour were of entirely different value, the one being perhaps forty per cent. above that of the other. Every shop we entered in this part of the city was full of these sacks and there were all the signs of a very big business being carried on in silk cocoons.

The following day, about noon, we passed the junction of another river with this one ; it was the Lang Chou river, and it is down this river that the timber and rafts come ; it was the bigger river of the two. Soon afterwards we came to Hsanchow Fu ; Fu always means a walled city, and there we took a walk on its walls. I don't mean we walked on garden-like walls, but on walls so broad that a carriage could drive along them. At a little distance south-west of this city are some high hills rising to about 2,500 feet.



On the fourth day from Wuchow we passed only small villages, and anchored at night under a pagoda which stood as a conspicuous mark on a cliff. Next day at noon we reached Huei-Huen Fu ; on the way to it we sighted, over the river banks, some remarkable and most noticeably shaped hills rising abruptly from the plains. Huei-Huen Fu was the largest city since passing Wuchow, and I proposed to make it my centre for some little time. After calling on the chief officials it was arranged they should send an escort, or guard of soldiers, with us to some large mines and smelting works which I intended visiting about seventeen miles distant.

The following day we started ; our escort was neatly uniformed and armed with Mausers, but they had a very unpleasant habit of suddenly firing off their rifles in the air just at the back of or behind us. Our march was through pretty country, well cultivated with maize, rice, and sweet potatoes. A village was passed *en route*, where we were objects of great curiosity to its inhabitants, but our guard would allow no one to come near us.

Arriving at the mines with a letter of introduction, I found the head of this establishment to be a very pleasant old Chinese gentleman, who at one time in his life had spent some four or five years in Hong Kong. I found that the head chemist had spent several years in San Francisco and a year in England. He spoke English well, and as I subsequently discovered, was quite an English scholar and a man who would make his mark ; I believe this has since proved true. It was arranged that we were to be the guests of the Manager, and that each of us was to be given a bedroom in his well-built two-storied house.

Having made all arrangements I promised to return shortly, and again set out for Huei-Huen. The *Sandpiper* was still here, but we left shortly afterwards in her, hoping to reach Nanning, from which place I expected to get important mining information from some Chinese merchants residing there ; but we had not gone very far when coming on to the Fu-Potan rapids we found further progress was impossible. The river had risen twenty-five feet during the past few days, and was expected to rise another fifteen feet and then a passage would be possible. The *Sandpiper* decided to wait. I, on the other hand, determined to return to Huei-Huen and to go on by native boat to Nanning later on in the summer. Hiring a large sampan with a little cabin I bid good-bye to H.M.S. *Sandpiper* and dropped down to our base. The furthest point we had reached—taking in the windings of the river—was just on 600 miles from Hong Kong.

About 120 miles to the south-west of us was the town of Taiping,

or "Great Peace." From this town started the great rebellion about 1851 which carried everything before it until Nanking, some 1,500 miles distant, was captured. It was this rebellion that General Gordon so largely helped to put down, and only after fourteen years from its first inception was it finally subdued. Various estimates, from two to four million, have been made of the number of lives sacrificed in that rebellion. Cities were sacked and destroyed in great numbers. The movement itself really began as a moral force—to put down idols, bribery and corruption, to live a moral life as brethren, and to act towards each other as such. It was not dissimilar in many respects from the Utopian ideas of the Bolsheviks; but though the ideas thus propounded appealed to the masses, the selfishness of human nature soon showed itself and became the dominant power, the idealism of peace and goodwill was soon lost and became instead the idealism of turbulence and malignancy, where blood, lust, rapine and violence surpassed all imagination. All was the antithesis of "Great Peace" (the name they started with), and "Great Peace" might very aptly be converted into "Great Slaughter." I was told that Taiping was in those days a small village and that this name meaning "Great Peace" was then given to it.

On my way back, while taking a walk along the banks of the river, I came across a large force of "Black Flags" on the march to Wuchow; they were all dressed in a simple blue uniform with Mauser rifles and bandoliers, and were orderly save for the indiscriminate firing off of their rifles into the air. I had heard much of the "Black Flags,"—the formidable foes whom the French had to face in their occupation of Tonquin (which latter country lies to the south-west of this place)—of their cruelties, their unruliness, and their brigand-like characteristics, so that I was in some trepidation as to the treatment we might meet with. My companion confessed he also was in doubt about their reception of us. As we walked out of the village we had entered we came right upon them—about 1,200 as near as we could count—but all kept ranks and, save for the cracks of the rifles let off especially for our benefit, they did not molest us. As they passed, they fired off not only their rifles but some pretty coarse and degrading epithets at us!

Arriving once more at Huei-Huen we returned to the Chinese Mine and took up our quarters there. It was surrounded by a wall with several watch-towers along it, and with gates which were always kept barred and locked at night. Some sixty soldiers kept constant guard against armed robbers. Both the Mine and Metallurgical Establishment proved to be of exceptional professional

interest, and were typical of the flux of the Chinese mind at the present day. They represented a curious mixture of old and modern ideas, of old and modern methods of working, of old and modern machinery. Proofs were not wanting that they were an attempt to introduce modern practice made by some more advanced (European- or American-educated) Chinese. There were modern boilers, a fine winding-engine, a well-timbered main-shaft going to the bottom of the mine, and steam-pumps, but the adventurous initiators of all this had reckoned according to our ideas and not according to those of their own country. They had overlooked the power of "Fenshui" and had not reckoned on the opposition to all advanced ideas; in common parlance they had reckoned without their host, and the present state of affairs was worse than the former, in my opinion.

But the whole affair, as I shall presently go on to show, was ludicrous, and would have been unbelievable save that we were in China. Our house was built opposite the smelting works, and at the base of a small hill that rose almost perpendicularly behind it. It was now midsummer, when the heat is intense, and it was greatly added to by the hot fumes that were wafted across from the smelters. The house was well-built and the rooms high and well ventilated, which was in a way some compensation. The furniture was of Chinese make and simple. What I feared most was the Chinese cooking; to my surprise it appeared to be equal to any French chef's, and what was put on the table was not only palatable, but appetising. Still, I asked no questions.

The old Chinese manager spoke English fairly well; he was always interesting to listen to, and imparted much information to me on Chinese life. One evening a wild cat was brought in, imprisoned in a kind of bamboo cage; it was a snarling, spitting little beast, which put me in mind of a Tasmanian-Demon, the wildest and most ferocious little animal in the world. I had hunted wild cat in the Southern States, but had never seen one alive at such close quarters. My host bought it. On asking him what he was going to do with it he replied, "fatten and eat it." The cat was carried away and put into a little court at the top of a flight of sixty steps. I thought to myself "I will keep an eye on that cat": for a few days I used to climb up that stairway to see if it was still there. But one day I forgot to do so, and on the following it had disappeared. On asking my Chinese friend what had become of it, he pretended it must still be there; but without much doubt what had happened was that it had been killed and served up for our supper the previous night, for it never appeared again! The

idea was not nice, but whatever I ate at that supper had been quite tasty and good even if it was pussy.

I had an experience at the mine which I should not like to have repeated. Down the main shaft was the ladder-way to the bottom of the mine, 300 feet below, but instead of a series of inclined ladders (as we should have put them in) there was one continuous vertical ladder the whole way down. The inside of the shaft-timbering was lined with two-inch boards, and there was not a chink between which one could put a toe. Down this ladder I descended, but long before I got to the bottom I was tired out. Think what it was to come up it! a 100 foot vertical ladder is always a stiff climb at any time, but I had no idea of what 300 feet meant; the heat, too, was tremendous. The first 200 feet I surmounted comparatively well, but the last fifty feet I never shall forget. As I got nearer and nearer the top of the shaft my strength was giving out; that last twenty-five feet I nearly stuck over; I tried to get rid of the weight of my body by all manner of expedients, I stuck my arms right through the rungs up to the arm pits endeavouring to get a rest, I tried to put my knees in between the rungs but to no purpose. Another twenty feet to climb! as I stepped off the ladder I found that all the strength had so completely gone out of my knees that I sank right down on to them and for some minutes it was impossible to stand upright. Let any miner used to climbing a 100 foot ladder try a 300 feet one, and he will find out that it is a perilously dangerous feat to accomplish. The Chinese, though, made no difficulty about it. Until I had attempted it I had not the remotest idea of the severity of the task. Another time, by making a Chinaman take a light scantling, and by putting one end through a rung of the ladder and the other leaning against the opposite side of the shaft, I got a kind of light staging to rest on.

This shaft had been sunk and timbered as a winding shaft; but here comes in the absurdity of the whole business—after all the cost of it and the cost, too, of boilers and engines brought all the way from America, it was decided that if erected it would bring bad luck; it was a 'Fenshui' business. Instead, they continued their old methods of winding up the ore by a forest of little windlasses placed across timbering; the timbering reached from the surface to the bottom of the mine in the open space left along the line of the lode by the extraction of the ore in the past. Each little windlass drew up from a depth of only about fifty feet, and so on all the way down. Each, again, only drew up a tiny basket of ore at a time. The lode carried a most wonderful variety of gold, silver, lead, zinc, copper and arsenic ores. All this

ore when brought to the surface by the above primitive methods was placed in large, open, paved yards where it was broken up by hand and then carefully sorted out into its different grades. From these ore heaps it was carried in baskets by hand to the smelting establishment where—under huge red tiled sheds—were the furnaces for smelting the lead ores, and near by were the mills in which the gold ores were being treated. There were other mills, too, where the silver and copper ores were being treated by wet methods.

In the smelting works Chinese methods were met with ; a crude mixture of the East and West prevented the use of the modern reverberatory furnaces in smelting the lead ores. Two very modern furnaces had been built at great expense, but the man in charge knew nothing about their practical working. The very essence of the working of these furnaces is to admit air, but he had systematically shut it all off ; so the galena or lead-ore was merely melted down, and no lead, as should have been the case, was produced. The reverberatory furnaces used thus were, therefore, quite useless and unnecessary, only adding an additional expense.

The argentiferous lead was being cupelled in a German cupellation furnace, and the silver thus obtained from the lead was quite satisfactory, but this lead was smelted in a large number of rude little open-hearth furnaces and not in the reverberatories. Again, the cupriferous silver-ores, other than the argentiferous galena-ores, were being washed with salts and treated with quite good results by the Russell lixiviation process, which is a most difficult process and needs a high chemical knowledge to work it ; in it the copper is finally precipitated by means of scrap iron. But the simplest extraction, namely that of the lead (the ores for which formed the bulk of those in the mine) in a modern furnace was a dead failure.

The whole business was a conundrum, for how was it possible for them to conduct complex processes successfully and yet fail on the more simple one ? The answer I found to be in the Chinese system of control. The Manager of such works must be an accountant, and consequently has no technical knowledge. The superintendent of each department is chosen by him, and if anyone is a failure he has to find it out himself ; for if any superintendent was to complain of the incompetency of another one, while the latter *might* lose his job the former would *certainly* do so for going against Chinese custom. Here was a case where the head chemist knew perfectly well the reason of the failure of the reverberatory smelting, but he dared not say or he would have lost his job.

The accounts kept on the mine—or for the matter of that, those of any industrial Chinese undertaking—are of the most minute and

detailed description, far surpassing our own. Here was the example of a Chinese mine, almost unique in itself, producing such a variety of different ores from one lode, well equipped with modern and very up-to-date metallurgical plant, with the equipment on the mine for winding up the ore, with air-compressors also for working rock-drills, on all of which a large amount of money had been spent, within an ace of success, but on account of "Fenshui" business and the crude system of management in the Metallurgical establishment, it was being run at a loss—truly typical of the country!

I must not forget to mention that they had a really fine piece of work represented in their Arsenical Flues—a kind of long brick-cemented tunnel or long horizontal chimney through which the arsenic fumes from the furnaces were passed; here, too, was deposited the arsenic in beautiful, white, fine crystalline particles, and the fumes finally passed into a high smoke stack.

The interesting part about this flue-like tunnel was that it crossed the valley for a length of about half a mile on a viaduct, with arches some thirty feet to forty feet high; all built both symmetrically and of well-laid brick.

Now, as they were unable to smelt their full output of the lead ores, they had an accumulation of several thousand tons of them, and to a minor extent of other ores. I had proposed to buy these from them on certain terms, provided that they came up to my sampling of them when smelted; for it was obviously unsafe to rely entirely on the result of the sampling, as it was impossible to guard against any possible attempt to "salt" them. With the hot sun beating fiercely upon us, and in clouds of dust, we began with a big gang of Chinese to mix, break and sample down these ores. After I had finished my inspection of the mine, certain proposals were made for my firm to join them as partners; and a verbal arrangement was arrived at on condition that the results of the smelting came up to the sampling. The ore was rich enough to bear transport down the river to Hong Kong and thence to Europe; river transport was cheap, and so was the short land-portage, and I reckoned that if this transaction were carried out quite a good profit could be made out of it.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THREATENED RISING AND FLIGHT.

As I used to stand superintending this work I noticed that every day two horsemen arrived at about 4 p.m., and that the manager always came out to meet them. Then some of his staff and himself would meet at his house, and my friend, who acted as my interpreter, informed me that telegrams were coming in giving them news of an outbreak in North China. Soon afterwards a telegram arrived for me, forwarded through a Chinese telegraph station about ten miles off, from our Consul at Wuchow; the purport of it was that I must leave immediately and hasten down to Wuchow without any delay, that the matter was urgent and that full and satisfactory explanations would be given on my arrival.

This was rather a thunderbolt, and though that evening the Chinese Manager told us that reports said that many European and Chinese had been killed somewhere, even then I did not take the matter too seriously. I rather thought my firm had communicated through our Consul and that they wanted me because of some pressing business. I had then nearly finished sampling one of the larger heaps of ore, so I arranged that my friend should go on to Hwei-Huen to engage a Chinese boat for our voyage down the river, while I would follow on as soon as I had finished my more urgent task. It was agreed that he was to hoist a flag on the boat so that I might recognize it amongst the many on the river when I came along. I remained behind to finish my sun-baking task, but soon followed.

Alone I set out for the river with a guard of Chinese soldiers after bidding good-bye to my estimable old Chinese manager, and my friend the chemist. The soldiers had, it was very evident, been told to take extra care of me, for they kept close alongside of me all the way, and were most assiduous in their attentions. I had picked up a very small Chinese vocabulary—long since gone from me—but sufficient to enable me to get a good laugh out of them. When once one can get a laugh out of a Chinaman unused to foreigners it is a sure sign of having won his friendship. It was a lovely morning, though intensely hot, for the sun can bear down in Southern China as much as on the Sahara. It was about 4 p.m. when we struck the river.

Walking along its shore and anxiously scanning the river for our boat I passed a "Likin" station. A "Likin" station is an Inland Tax Collector's; on all boats passing Huei-Huen a toll was levied, and on salt a specially high one. A little way ahead was a Chinese gun-boat, which I subsequently learnt had attempted to smuggle a cargo of salt past the "Likin" station, but had been stopped by it. This station was itself well armed with guns commanding the river; there was therefore a feud between the guard of the station and the sailors on the gun-boat. As I passed the former some five of the guard ran out to see the foreigner, and followed me up to the gun-boat, when suddenly from the latter out pounced a number of sailors and surrounded the guard. A big crowd collected around them but I could only hear some sort of *mélée* going on between them. Just then I caught sight of my boat on the river and hiring a sampan I pushed off to her; and from the deck of our boat with a pair of glasses we saw that two of the guard were lying on the sloping beach while some of the sailors were throwing heavy stones on them and it looked as if they were bashing in their skulls. Presently a number of soldiers from the fort near by came running along, firing off their rifles in the air. Coming up to the sailors, they soon surrounded them and went off with them, followed by a dense crowd of onlookers.

In my previous trip here we had paid a visit to the commander of this fort, who had hospitably entertained us and shown us over the soldiers' quarters. To our surprise their rooms were clean and everything spick and span.

After dark we sent our boy ashore to find out what the fracas had been about, and on his return we heard all about it. The poor men who had followed me had been so occupied with the foreigner that they must have forgotten about the gun-boat's presence. I was at the time afraid lest I was, for some inscrutable reason, the direct cause of the fight. After it was all over we watched the merchant-class of people coming down to the river bank to take a stroll after the heat of the day. Many of them brought with them their favourite birds—Chinese Mocking-Birds—in little bamboo cages, a custom I had noticed at other towns when coming up the river. On asking why they did so, they replied, "the birds needed airing." In appearance they are not unlike the American Mocking-Bird; they are good songsters, and fetch high prices.

As we were about to leave that evening H.M.S. *Sandpiper* came in and we went off to dine on board. I learnt from the Commander that he had received a telegram from the Consul at Wuchow



saying that there was some serious trouble in China, and that at Wuchow things were looking very threatening in the Chinese town. However, he had received no orders to return there and so was remaining here. Before I left him news came in from shore that the telegraph line (which passed not far from here and went right through to Burmah) had broken down, so the Commander was in a quandary as to what he ought to do. I was hoping he would decide to return and save us our eight or nine days by boat down the river.

Bidding all goodbye we got back to our Chinese boat. Our crew consisted of one man, one woman, and two small children. In the stern of the boat was built a small house divided into three cabins; the middle cabin was long compared with the other two, and in its centre we could just stand up, while on its sides we could just sit up. It was beautifully clean, with well-scrubbed floors, but without furniture of any sort. One of the other two cabins served as our kitchen and our crew's kitchen, and the other as the family's bedroom. In the bows of the boat was a very small cabin which my servant-boy occupied.

After a great struggle in pushing and shoving our way through the cram of boats into which we had got as we left Huei-Huen, we dropped down stream about two miles and there we anchored for the night. Coming up the river many of the junks were being towed by long strings of men who, pulling on the lengthy tow ropes, were to be seen steadily marching along the river banks or else climbing round the rocky promontories that frequently protruded into the river. The tow-line was made out of bamboo and was fastened to the top of the mast which, unlike an English one, was formed out of two pieces, springing from the sides of the boat and meeting high up above them, and was again well secured by stay-ropes. On the shore-end of the tow-rope many short lines were led off from it at equal distances apart, and each ended in a loop which the tower put over his shoulders. By this arrangement as many as twenty to thirty towers walked along, pulling as they went, and no one interfered with anyone else. It was funny, too, to see that the people on the junks sat down, not as we sit, with our faces overlooking the view, but with their backs to it.

The scenery in some parts of the river is really exquisite, the hills being often clothed in green with bright crimson barren patches of rock here and there amidst it; while the broad strips or terrace-like flats along the shores would narrow to nothing, leaving only the steep sides of the hills dipping down into the water. The little villages before referred to, snuggling amidst lovely clumps of the feather-bamboo, were charming pictures of real Chinese country life.

I must go back to an amusing incident that occurred on our way down at a place where we stopped for a day (or the greater part of one) to visit some reported ancient silver mines situated near the top of a hill above us. The Chinese villagers near by said they were guarded by a dragon and no one could enter them. Nothing daunted we started to make the ascent; no Chinaman would accompany us! We had not gone far when we came upon a kind of grass growing on the hill-side, the like of which I should say "man never saw before": for we no sooner attempted to crawl up its slopes than down we came, so slippery was it. We might as well have tried to crawl up a sheet of ice. We had, therefore, to return, and then by the help of a wooden mallet and some wooden pegs we started to haul ourselves up by them as we drove them into the ground just ahead of us. The process was slow but effectual, for we arrived at last at the top of the hill; down one side of it were very precipitous rocks, with what looked like the entrance into a big cave, but we could find no way down to it. Had we brought a rope with us we might have scaled the steep sides of the rocks for the distance down was not great. Neither of us, though, was willing to make the journey down and up again, and even going down again was laborious work, for we had to slither down holding on to our pegs. Had one of these broken we should have gone down like a streak of lightning and ended as a grease spot, for the friction would certainly have fired our clothes. On getting back to the flats we quite understood what our Chinese friends meant by the dragon guarding the mines; in fact we assured them we had seen it but that being foreigners it dared not harm us, which they probably believed.

On the journey down the river, some distance below Huei-Huen, we came on the furthest Mission Station up country, and on calling in there the Chinese servants told us that their masters and mistresses had all gone to Wuchow, and that a big fight between the Chinese and foreigners had occurred. About forty miles below this station we came on the other Mission Station (there were only two above Wuchow), and here we heard the same tale. After this confirmation of rumours, to which hitherto we had not paid much attention, we began to think there might be a serious rising.

That night, whilst anchored off some villages—for we always anchored at night—the cook went ashore to buy provisions. On her return she told us that at the next town down the river her countrymen had killed some Chinese Christians, and had burnt their church, and that they talked of killing all native Christians; however, this was afterwards proved to have been an abortive attempt at a

rising in Southern China and to have had nothing to do with the Boxer one. Afterwards we thought it better not to show ourselves, so kept well within the walls of our cabin.

At last, after a most delightful trip down the river which had been one panorama of Chinese life in the midst of the most picturesque and lovely scenery, we arrived at Wuchow. Here we found that all foreigners had been sent away and only the foreign Consuls remained, and that placards were openly posted on the city walls inciting the people to rise and kill the foreigners and all native Christians. We heard then for the first time of the Boxer rising. Our Consul was surprised that the *Sandpiper* had not come down the river and that the *Robin* had not returned from Hong Kong. It was only the fear of these two gun-boats returning which probably prevented a rising in the town, for news had come in of the killing of native Christians and the burning of their chapels or churches in the country.

We agreed to go on in a native boat to Hong Kong and ask that a gun-boat be sent up the river, so after a day spent here we started. There had been no telegraphic communication with Hong Kong for several days ; but we had not gone far when we passed the *Robin* steaming up the river. At a small town lower down we picked up a steamer, Chinese-owned, and took passage on her for Hong Kong.

When I arrived there I went up to the Peak Hotel and found my wife out, for she was not expecting me ; on her return she had a pleasant surprise, as she had been anxious about me on account of rumours of an outbreak in the South. I happened to look at the visitors' cards on the rack of the hotel while talking to my wife, and amongst them spotted the name of a cousin of hers ; there she was, too, lying in a deck-chair in the corridor ! Both she and my wife had been in the same hotel for four days and not met. We had heard she had gone to winter in India, and she had no idea that we were in China, so we had a very pleasant meeting. Later on she went to Tientsin ; here she nursed the wounded and again at Wei-hai-wei, afterwards returning home with the China War medal, a well-earned reward.

In one's travels it is so often brought home to one how small the world is ; here is another instance. Calling one afternoon with my wife on Lady Blake, wife of the Governor, we found her alone, and she pressed us to stay and meet a Chinese notable and a Chinese lady whom he had asked to introduce to her. Unfortunately we had another engagement and could not stay, but the sequel was that the Chinese lady was no other than Miss Blake, their daughter, who, as we went out, came in dressed as a Chinese lady. She quite

“ took in ” her father ; she had learnt Chinese and her Chinese friend translated for her ; but Lady Blake, who was quite unaware that the Chinese lady to be introduced to her was her daughter, recognized her by her voice. The get-up must have been very good to have quite taken in Sir Henry, and Lady Blake very nearly.

Bishop Hoare, who was so well-known and a great Chinese scholar, had invited my wife and myself to dinner that night, and the lady I took in to dinner told me that she and I had recently travelled together. I had to assure her that I had no recollection of it and thought she must be mistaken, but she was equally certain that she was not. She was a handsome-looking woman, in a very nice décolleté toilet that suited her well. She reminded me that we had travelled together from Sam-Shui on the little steamer we had picked up after leaving Wuchow. Then I remembered, but could still hardly believe she was the same Chinese lady whom I had met on board, but to whom I had not spoken. She turned out to be one of the China Inland Missionaries, and with her husband, also dressed in Chinese garments, we had thus travelled together down to Hong Kong. I asked her why she dressed so and she gave me a very good reason, namely, to avoid attracting attention in the interior : if dressed in European clothes they would have been mobbed by eager sight-seers, for the clothes had greater power of attraction than even foreign faces ; but the native garb and hair tightly drawn back Chinese fashion and plastered down did not suit my lady ; she looked grotesque. The Bishop, who was subsequently lost in a typhoon off Hong Kong, was a great loss to both the English and the Chinese communities.

The news from Tientsin was bad, Indian troops were passing through Hong Kong on their way up North. The 23rd Fusiliers had already left for the North. Peking was reported to be cut off. The Lilly Society in the South, a more powerful one than the Boxer in the North, was threatening rebellion (the signs of which I had met with), but the arrival in Canton about this time of Li Hung Chang, who successfully grappled with it and broke it before it had had time to complete its organization, saved the South from an even greater outbreak than the Boxer one. In Canton heads were being chopped off at the rate of twenty-five or more a day, and wherever Li Hung Chang's strong arm reached forth the heads were lopped off without pity or mercy, but his terrible and apparently harsh methods saved the South. As it was impossible to carry out my programme in South China I had to give it up and make a trip instead to the Federated Malay States and also to Japan and Korea. I will now relate some of my experiences in connection with them.

## CHAPTER XX.

### PAHANG AND THE RAUB GOLD MINE.

I WAS asked to visit and report upon the Raub Gold Mine, really the only gold mine of any standing in the Federated Malay States. So leaving my wife and baby I went down by the German mail to Singapore, and again met my old friends, S., "the father of the great Tanjong Pagar Docks," and A., his partner. After a day's stay with them I left Singapore for these mines. Again I enjoyed one of those delightful trips up the Malacca Straits to the port of Kwala Klang, and found my way thence across Selangor up over the pass in the mountains that separates this State from that of Pahang.

On the top of the Pass I found one of those rest-houses so welcome to the tired traveller. The view and scenery from here were unique, and only such as are found in the tropics—a mixture of wild tropical luxuriance of tangled jungle and forest life covered the steep rugged granite sides of these hills, while lower down on the plains were to be seen the villages nestling under palm trees, surrounded by paddy-fields, which showed by their bright green patches amid the jungle. A few elephants crossing up over the pass laden with stores for some of the small mines located on these hills gave the finishing touches to one of those many vivid scenes of tropical life that are for ever impressed on one's memory. I stayed over a day here just to rest and revel in this charming solitude, perched up so high and commanding one of nature's most beautiful pictures.

Making the descent into Pahang I arrived the following day at the mine. The history of this mine is of so interesting a character that I cannot refrain from giving a little account of it, as exemplifying the way in which mining enterprises are the great pioneers in opening up new countries. This mine was discovered amid the jungle-wilds of Pahang, then a little-known or explored State. At infinite risk and with terribly hard work machinery was imported on the eastern side of the Peninsula, and by boats and canoes it was transported up the river and then carried overland across swamps and through jungle country up to its present site. For a number of years a twenty-stamp-mill had been pounding away on the gold ores obtained from the reefs found here, and had been productive of a well-earned reward in the shape of substantial dividends. Situated on the flanks of a low range of hills I found

quite a flourishing little community ; so far as its white elements were concerned, it was made up largely of Australians.

The late Manager, who had so successfully conducted all this pioneer work, had recently died, never having recovered from a carriage accident. Up to this point the mines had been successfully worked. This led the Directors, by the advice of the late Manager, to embark on a much larger scheme of development which at the time of my visit had been carried out. A new forty-stamp was just being finally adjusted before starting up, while a very fine hydro-electro plant had been erected on the river eight or ten miles distant, which was to furnish horse-power for the mine and mill. Another unit of forty-stamps was in course of manufacture in Melbourne, Australia. It was taken for granted by the late Manager that the same results would be forthcoming on the ore thus opened up as on that of the past. No hint of anything of a contrary character had been given to his Directors and largely increased returns were genuinely expected by them.

My task was to report on the mine and approximate the value of the ore opened up, or, as we say, ' blocked out.' But when I came to examine the Assay-plans I found there were none, for what had been done was on the old mining type of rule of thumb practice. Still, nothing daunted, I started on my preliminary inspection ; the amount of ore opened up was well in excess of what the larger mill would call for ; of that I felt sure after about three days observation in the mines. Then I took a number of typical samples and panned them down ; then I received my first rude shock for in value they represented nothing like that of the ore that was being won from the section of the mine which was supplying ore to the smaller mill. Everywhere I found the old rule of thumb practice—no organization or co-ordination between so-called different departments. The mine foreman's orders were to supply ore of the average grade to the mill, and even this had begun to be a difficult matter, for the old part of the mine had long since dropped in value, though by taking its richer parts it was still possible to keep it up. There had been no attempt to sample systematically and assay any part of the mine ; there was not even a plan of the whole workings. The mine, too, was badly ventilated and the heat underground great. On surface the heat was always that of a hot-house, but below ground one worked in one's own perspiration.

For several weeks I worked, first of all making a rapid trace or plan of the mine, and then I set to work sampling it systematically. Fortunately the ore was easily broken in most places and rapid work could be effected. Next we had to grind down and assay the

very many samples and finally to tabulate them out and plot them down against the respective blocks of ground they represented in the mine. These results I kept very carefully to myself, but outside a comparatively small tonnage of rich ore the grade of the ore (*i.e.*, the value) was very low; in fact the mine proved to be on the margin of payability, and that only under efficient management and by the introduction of a high order of organization. It was a certainty, in my opinion, that under the then system of management disaster faced the enterprise.

During my stay here I received several cables from my firm in Hong Kong asking me to return there immediately as certain matters required my urgent and immediate attention; but having set my hand to the plough I had to go through with what I had undertaken to do.

A few miles from the main camp was the logging-camp where the timber used in the mine and for the construction of the mill was cut down. Some of the elephants employed in bringing in the logs to the saw mills were brought up to the mine-camp during my visit, and every evening these used to go into a pond before sunset for their bath, and I always endeavoured to get home in time to watch them. Like so many children they used to play and sport about in the water and spout water over each other. Their mahouts would first scrub them down with regular scrubbing brushes, making these huge brutes lie down on their sides while they operated upon them.

On the Government post-road, two of these creatures were used to carry the mails. The smaller one was always given about twenty minutes' start before the larger one was allowed to proceed. The little one usually came tearing in ahead of the other, but sometimes the bigger one would catch up with him and then give him a regular lambasting with his trunk. Another time I was coming across some paddy-fields on top of their mud-built banks, when I perceived one of these creatures coming towards me carrying on its back a whole family of Malays with all their household goods hanging down its sides and tied by bits of rope and string. Was I to go back or was the elephant? there was no room for both of us to pass so I waited to see what was going to happen. When it had nearly come up to me the mahout stopped it; then I saw it with one of its fore-feet making a foothold on the side of the mud-bank wall; then, planting one foot on it, it made another foothold with its hind foot on which it rested, and left me enough room to pass. I don't know at which I was the more astonished, at the intelligence of the animal in thus making way for me, or at those frail mud

walls standing the weight of the great beast resting at an angle on their sides. Strangely, this was the second time I had been caught when crossing paddy-fields by an elephant, with just such a family on a removal. There is no other animal with such intelligence, and it is astonishing how they will help each other when at work.

An amusing incident at the logging camp occurred during my stay here. The Superintendent was the only white man living there, and he lived in a comfortable bungalow with a nice staircase or pair of wooden steps leading up to his front verandah. Twice a troop of wild elephants came down and carried off this stairway, completely destroying it. Soon afterwards, when the Chinese coolies were all away at work in the middle of the day, the elephants entered their lines and deliberately pulled down every house within them; but not a woman or child did they touch though naturally both women and children were very much frightened. Nothing but pure wanton mischief! The Government officials decided to build a big stockade and entrap this troop into it. The drive was to take place a fortnight after I left the mine and I regretted very much that time did not permit me to stay and witness it. The description of how the tame elephants are used to effect this capture of the wild ones is marvellous, again proving the wonderful sagacity of these creatures. Elephants which are caught and broken in this way mostly pine and fret to death, so that the authorities seldom resort to capturing them, and only do so when they become a nuisance or danger.

If they were not so large and did not eat so much I know of no animal I would sooner have for a pet. The natives all say that an elephant never forgives a real injury, and they have many stories of how it may be years after an event that the injured animal will take his revenge. The elephants live mostly on the jungle produce, but when they are working this is supplemented by a certain amount of paddy given in much the same way as we give oats to horses.

In the mornings at daybreak we used to be awakened by the shrill cries of the Wah Wahs or troops of a species of monkey—pretty, slender, tall-looking animals. The sound of their cry is similar to that of their name Wah Wah, and as the sun rises the forest resounds with their strange cries. Always heard at daybreak, one seldom hears them again during the day.

After completing my report I returned via Selangor to Singapore, where I handed in my report to the Board Meeting held that same day.

My report was like a bomb in their midst, for it came as a complete



surprise and "knock-out" to them. I had not given a clue as to its nature to a single person outside the Board, yet when I afterwards went into the Club, where I had many friends amongst the members, I was given the cold shoulder. The value of the scrip had already fallen tremendously since the result of my report was known. The Singapore papers came out with almost abusive remarks about myself, and letters were inserted making out that I had been sent down to "bear," *i.e.*, to run down the shares of this Gold-Mining Company. Others, again, inferred that I did not know my business.

So important was the matter that the Board very wisely sent for another Mining Engineer who was in Australia, a man well-known and of good reputation. I felt that he could only report as I had done; but subsequently, much to my surprise, he went further than I had gone, for he not only knocked down the amount and value of the good ore I had estimated, but practically condemned the mine. In the long run my estimates proved to be very close ones,—somewhat below, but in general they represented closely the real value and state of the mine; the second opinion went beyond that of the Mining Engineer, and went so far as to accuse the Board of Directors in Singapore of having used the mine for Stock gambling purposes; but a more unworthy assertion could scarcely have been made. Each member of the Board was of the highest standing; all were well-known, and highly respected men. An examination of their books proved that instead of selling shares in the Company they had been steadily acquiring them, and that at high prices. The accusation was an action most unworthy of a mining man, and was quite unwarranted and unsupported by any proof whatever. To give him his due I must say that the conclusion to which he jumped was no doubt caused by the extreme difficulty (almost impossibility) in thinking that a mine could have been so run without any leakage of the facts having become known to the Board; but on their side it was only natural that they should have placed so much confidence in the late manager, who had, under almost inconceivable difficulties, run the mine on its smaller scale so successfully. Whether the latter was playing a deeper game no one can say, but I give the benefit of the doubt to the dead, and find the explanation in the prospector's power of always magnifying things, and in his extraordinarily optimistic spirit; at all events it was the only way in which one could account for the state of things I found there.

After this visit I returned to Hong Kong, where I learnt that the Japanese papers had copied from the Singapore papers, and I

don't remember reading at that time one single line which suggested that my report after all might carry some weight ; not a single attack of those I saw ventured to give any specific reason against my past record ; all were without an iota of justification based on the assumption that I had deliberately entered into a conspiracy to "bear " or run down the shares of the Company. I mention this as an example of what the Mining Engineer may have to face if he does his duty honestly and fearlessly.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### TRENGGANU AND THE BUNDI TIN MINES.

ANOTHER expedition which I made (not at this time but previous to going to South Africa) was to the Bundi Tin Mines in the State of Tringano (or Trengganu), then a State under the suzerainty of Siam but having its own Sultan. Since those days it has been brought by Treaty with Siam under our own Government as one of the Federated Malay States. It was then a little-known state, dependent for its revenue mostly on its export of jungle produce, and the only Europeans in it were those at these mines.

Travelling up from Singapore in a little steamer trading along the coast we anchored off the Tringano River. It was pitch dark as the ship's boat landed me on the beach, behind which was a small native town. There they left me, with my small amount of baggage. I got a native to carry it up into the town, and found, on arriving there, that I had been landed on the wrong side of the river; the house of the Company who owned these mines was on the opposite side, and their agent, a native, lived there. The natives spoke a patois of Siamese, and it was only after hunting about that I found a Malay; my vocabulary of the language was little enough but from him I found out the mistake that had been made, and we started to obtain a canoe to take me across the river; but the canoeman said they were afraid to cross as the sharks were bad, and no one ever crossed after dark. They went through the pantomime of showing me how a shark could upset a boat, and how it then would have a good meal off its occupants. I offered quite a big sum to be taken over but all refused. I gave up the attempt and was preparing to turn in for the night when some new men came along and offered to take me, which offer I gladly accepted; we set out, but I noticed as we paddled across that the paddlers kept splashing their paddles vigorously, making, as they did so, a vociferous noise—this was evidently done to frighten away the sharks.

As I walked in upon the Agent he was greatly surprised to see me for he had not expected me. He was a Malay and spoke fairly passable English, and I was put up very comfortably by him. The following day was principally spent in getting a good crew together to take me up the river, and in the

afternoon we started, with a crew of eleven men for our "prow" or big canoe—one of the well-shaped native boats, lightly built, with well-defined lines sharp ending in a high prow, similar to those delineated in books on Malay life. In the stern of the "prow" were erected a few bamboo uprights and cross-pieces, over which were laid some "Kedjangs" or palm-mats to protect me from the sun. It is a great improvement on the African canoe, being both comfortable and comparatively roomy.

We paddled up the river which was, like most tropical ones, full of interest. To the unobservant it would perhaps seem monotonous; the forest with its jungle, viewed from its broader aspect has the appearance of a great dull green mass of foliage, stretching out like an impenetrable wall; whether seen on one river or another it has a great sameness about it; but in detail there is not a corner rounded, or a fresh stretch of water entered upon, that has not its own ever-changing charms of superb beauty and grandeur. The splendid old trees—often covered with a perfect garden of lovely ferns of all sorts growing out of them—are in themselves a perfect picture of loveliness; or, again, the most fairy-like glens are passed amidst which stand clumps of those wondrous fern-trees, with their brown, mossy trunks ending in great clusters of wide-spreading feathery fronds and covered again with a garden of delicate ferns growing around their trunks; while on the mud-banks of the river the most curious forms of life were to be seen in the shape of some species of Crustacea unknown to myself. Gorgeous butterflies came wandering out from the jungle to fly along the banks, and re-entering it were lost to sight; or at other times they were seen flitting across the river. Then again birds of brilliant plumage flew out, quickly to dart back to the forest, though flights of swallow-like birds of deep blue plumage kept on alighting on rocks ahead of the prow, and as we advanced they sped on to others as if all were intent on watching our movements. Occasionally a troop of monkeys were passed, but generally they retired quickly into the fastnesses of the jungle. All kinds of fantastic new forms of ever exuberant vegetation around us kept appearing, adding immensely to the enjoyment one experienced in watching for these varieties of form which cast their shadows amid the gloom of the forest.

Towards sunset the mosquitoes descended in swarms, and what had been hitherto a day of delightful repose became one of agitation caused by the bites of these venomous little pests. Now and again one would hear a paddler smack his side to crush one of them, but on the whole the crew paid little attention to them.

A worse pest to the half-naked crew are the large horse-flies which are very active in broad daylight, and "smack, smack" at them might often be heard. Occasionally, in the calm silence of the forest with only the sounds of the splash of the paddle, I would be suddenly startled by a loud slap given by one of the crew on the back of the man in front of him—enough to make any ordinary mortal jump out of his seat, but so accustomed are these river people to these attacks of the fly and the ensuing slaps that they calmly paddle on not even wincing at the violence of the blows.

After dark we stopped to camp for about three hours. A fire was lit on a little sandy bank, and the men were quickly at work cooking their evening meal, while I busied myself over my own supper. After we had all eaten well we sat over the fire; the men chatted among themselves, the subject being evidently myself, but not a word could I understand of what they said. Soon afterwards I turned in, lying on a bamboo mat spread at the bottom of the prow, and I was quickly asleep.

I had supposed we had camped for the night, but on waking up I was astonished to find that some of the men were silently paddling. I sat up and peered into the dark jungle forest on either side with the gleam of the moon lighting up the waterway in front of us; I listened to the splash of the paddles—the only noise on its waters—breaking the silence of the night, with the exception of the hum of insect life and an occasional cry of some animal in the thickets around: the strangeness of the scene struck me, how weird an environment it all was! Something enchanting, something indefinable, something that carried one's thoughts away into the mystic realm of the unseen.

Towards morning as daylight broke a troop of Wah Wahs made the forest echo and re-echo with their cries and Nature was once more awake. Mooring soon after the sun had well risen in a perfect paradise of a little dell-like cove we stopped for breakfast. We all first performed our ablutions, and afterwards I found myself the centre of attraction, for shaving myself and that without a glass, I had unwittingly given my crew an entertainment in which all were deeply interested.

After breakfast we resumed our voyage but the paddling was not so vigorous as that on the preceding afternoon. Mid-day we stopped for a rest and my crew slept under the shade of one of those giant trees which sheltered us with its thick foliage from the glare of the scorching sun. Thus another day passed amidst those entrancing and wonderful scenes of nature's barbaric splendours which so many of us Mining Engineers have the good

fortune to experience. As I look back on them I can almost recall their actual realities again, so vividly have they left their imprint upon me.

Always when camped, as the crew sat round in a circle talking, the sireh box was produced, for betel-nut chewing was their principal occupation ; often in the middle of paddling one of the crew would cease, fling his paddle to the bottom of the prow and producing his sireh box, go methodically to work and roll up a little leaf, its quota of lime and spice with a bit of betel-nut in the centre of it. This was then deftly folded up and slipped into the side of the mouth, the little boxes carrying the paste and spices then had their lids carefully replaced and all was put away in the larger or sireh box itself. Next, the paddler would first loosen and then draw his Sarong tightly around him, finishing it off with a twist of its upper edge by tucking it into a fold around his loins and then calmly resume paddling. Hour after hour they would continue thus with only a few remarks passing between them and the boatswain sitting in the stern of the prow ; but when the heat of the day began to wane they would become more talkative.

Tropical forests and jungle, when taken from a broadly perspective point of view, are, as already stated, monotonous ; they are not one scene of gaily-coloured flowers and birds, rather a never-ending scene of greens and browns ; but to the observer they are full of the most enchanting little pictures of all that the imagination can possibly conjure up. The lovely coloured birds have to be watched for, also the butterflies ; neither are troops of monkeys to be found sporting about everywhere, they, too, have to be watched for. So much depends upon the temperament of the traveller ; to one, only a sense of death, disease, and all that is horrible is conveyed by all that he sees ; to another the scene is full of the most indescribable and enchanting pictures, and to the observant, especially, it is one continual source of interest, as he sees one kaleidoscopic series of exquisite peeps of enthralling and inspiring grandeur. It is, perhaps, as I said, a question of temperament ; for example, take the cocoa-nut palm-tree—its feathery-looking fronds are to the one temperament only emblematic of funeral plumes, to another, a glorious vision of majestic and stately beauty.

Happily for me, I loved those journeys and sojourns in forest and jungle. They were not without their forbidding and gloomily weird pictures, where lurked alligators, snakes, leeches and fevers ; but the exquisite and lovely pictures of all that is most beautiful which were met with so constantly and which conveyed an over-

powering sense of wonderment and even awe, made up for the gloom that undoubtedly casts its shadow over those who only view these scenes as a whole—even as an everlasting picture of dull greens and browns, labyrinths of morasses and vegetable entanglement, populated by the foul denizens of animal existence.

My description can but faintly convey the reality of these river-trips, and so far from seeming to be a reality they always made me feel as if I was in a fairy scene in some other world rather than in this prosaic world of ours.

At daybreak next morning I awoke to find we were off a well-constructed little wharf with a small crane erected at its far end—a visible sign that we were once more at an outpost of civilization. I had slept mostly through the night so had little idea of how long my crew had been paddling. Not a soul was to be found here, but there were some empty trucks standing on a line that led to the mine. Putting my baggage and myself in one of these, and with two of my crew pushing it, we set out for the mine. It was about three and a half miles distant across a flat, the whole way being through a big clearing overgrown with coarse lalang grass which had once been partly cultivated ground and old worked-out alluvial tin mines.

As we approached the mine we came upon the hills which we had seen away in the background; perched on the flanks of a ridge that ran down from their main chain were the bungalows of the European staff, while nearer the base lay the mill, and close by it the native village, and up the valley the mine. This mine is still working though it is many years since I was there.

As we reached the camp, the steam-whistle was blowing calling the day-shift men to work; every one was astir. I went up to the Manager's bungalow and took him by surprise, as I was not expected, but my surprise was even greater than his, for I found his sister here keeping house for him. It seemed so strange to find a countrywoman—the only one here, too,—living in these wilds. As we sat talking on the verandah waiting for breakfast I happened to see what I thought were some ordinary fowls feeding just on the outer edge of the jungle; I innocently asked if they were not afraid to lose them feeding out in the open. The Manager looked up immediately, cast his eye in their direction, and ran for his gun, but was too late for them. They were wild-fowl and not domestic ones, or the progenitors of our own barn-yard fowls. He assured me that it was the first time he had ever seen any in the open. They are a wary bird in their wild state and are seldom found save in the dense jungle. At breakfast we had much to talk

about for neither brother nor sister had been out of the jungle for many months, and they had seen no visitor from the outside world during this time.

One of the objects of my visit beside the inspection of the mine was to enquire into the cause of that mysterious and fatal disease "Berri-Berri." Out of some sixty Javanese coolies that had arrived about a fortnight before my arrival more than a third were already dead. This camp had suffered much from this dread disease, which attacked both Javanese and Chinese coolies, all of whom had to be imported to work these mines. The Assistant-Manager and myself started to make out tabulated statements of the way in which the sufferers from it had been employed, of the different boarding-houses at which they had eaten, of the water supply and its source as supplied to these houses, and of the Company's sanitary arrangements. Very exhaustively we went into these matters, also into the food supplied to them. Only one thing stood out very clearly, that the engineers, blacksmiths, firemen and carpenters appeared to have been almost immune from it. No other clue was forthcoming, neither could the disease be accounted for by the sleeping-quarters being unhealthy. The probable explanation of these men being almost immune from it was that they were better paid, and consequently better fed men.

"Berri-Berri" to the non-professional man has all the appearance of being a dropsical disease. The Governor of Singapore Jail at that time told me that formerly "Berri-Berri" used to sweep through the prison, but that in the last outbreak he had succeeded in stopping it by changing the entire diet from rice to one of flour. The cause of it is often put down to bad rice (or rice just beginning to ferment), or again to bad fish. In some outbreaks it had undoubtedly been traced to one of these causes, but in the majority of them this is not the cause. Some again say that polished rice causes it. But a friend of mine, who has had great experience in these outbreaks, tells me that he did not think that this had anything to do with it. His experience had been that where there is an outbreak and where coolies are fed on this kind of rice he had succeeded in stopping the plague by substituting the country rice; where they are fed on country rice the same good effect had been brought about by substituting the mill-hulled or polished rice.

The Dutch for over thirty years carried on war in Sumatra with the Acheenese; the length of the war was almost entirely due to "Berri-Berri" proving so frightfully fatal and causing so many set-backs. Java was half ruined by the cost of this war by reason of the heavy bounties (paid to men to enlist for it) which in the



aggegrate mounted up to immense sums. The Dutch doctors who had studied this disease for years had come to the conclusion that it is some form of consumption of the nervous system. I am not aware what light has since been thrown upon it, nor what remedies have been found for it, but, when I left, the disease was as mysterious as "Diccops" is to the horse in the Transvaal, and that, too, the Vets put down to a rapid consumption of the nervous system. Better food and a better selection of coolies than the general average of these, were the only partial remedies then known against it. If a European is attacked an immediate sea voyage is the best remedy, but it is only likely to prove beneficial if taken without delay when the first symptoms appear.

The tin deposit found in these mines is unique and to this day not fully understood, so that, without going into technicalities I will only say that it was one which occupied my attention closely and which even now interests me. I have again quite recently met the Assistant-Manager, a very capable man who subsequently became manager. But alas! he, poor fellow, has been twice gassed in this war and is now a hopeless invalid. Shortly after I left the camp the Manager himself was killed by falling down a shaft. He had a most happy family comprising a Wah Wah, a fox terrier, and a Persian cat. These lived on the verandah and were the most amusing combination of pets I ever came across. The Wah Wah was secured by a light chain to a rail running the length of the front of the verandah, while over the rail was slipped a ring attached to the end of the chain so that the monkey had the run of the whole length and of about half the width of the verandah.

There I used to sit in a basket chair watching their antics. The Wah Wah would watch its opportunity to seize the cat by the tail, and swing it along half the length of the verandah; the fox terrier, almost as alert as the mischief-maker, would then seize him and roll him over; then the cat, recovering himself, would join in the play. Many times have I seen this enacted and all was carried out in the friendliest spirit. The Wah Wah was an exceptionally intelligent animal. At meal-time he was let loose and sat on a mat by the side of his master's chair, on which was placed his food; so well-disciplined was he that if I offered him a banana he would not take it until his master gave him a sign that he might do so. One day a week he was allowed his complete freedom and on that day all the Chinese women kept indoors, but not so the Malay, Javanese or Tringanese women.

The extraordinary explanation of this was that a Chinese woman, who used to bring bananas up to the house for sale, had been in

the habit of teasing the animal by offering him a banana and then putting it back into her basket and going off without giving it to him. The animal watched his opportunity for revenge, and one day when she was not looking he caught her by the arm and severely bit her. Now when let go free for the first time he made off for the native village and bit several women in the arm, but strangely they were all Chinese women ; not one other native woman was attacked by him ; hence the reason for the Chinese women having to keep indoors and shut themselves up once a week. The Chinese women dressed exactly as the other native women, not (as is usual in the Federated Malay States) in their own country's garb, but in the Sarong dress of the country ; this made it all the more remarkable that the Wah Wah could distinguish the difference of race, and that he only attacked the Chinese. I represented to the Manager that it was rather autocratic of him and unfair to these women thus to punish them, but like a good many of our race he considered the natives as inferior beings, and so put his monkey's holiday, or outing, before their convenience. Going into the mill one day the pampered pet swung off on to some steam pipes and severely burnt his hands, but on his subsequent visits by some means or other he found out which were the steam ones and was never known to burn his hands again. I have seen the little creature come home after his outing tired out, and try to put his own collar on and fasten himself up by it.

At last the day came to bid goodbye to this busy little centre of industry, and it was arranged that the sister of the Manager should take the opportunity of my escort and return with me to Singapore, thence go home to Australia. The journey down the river took only half as long as when coming up, and on our arrival at its mouth we were lucky enough to find a steamer anchored in the offing, loading produce. We remained two days here before finally sailing for Singapore, where I bid goodbye to my fair hostess.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### SELANGOR AND PERAK.

ANOTHER of my professional visits was to some large tin mines in Selangor.

These belonged to an English firm but had been let out to a well-known native, a wealthy Kling (Indian), a great racing man who was well known in Penang and Singapore where his horses used to run at their race-meetings. He again had formed a Kongsie (or Chinese Company) and had successfully worked these mines on a basis of royalty. The large concession, he maintained, had been almost worked out and the object of my visit was to ascertain if this were really the case. What I did find was that there was still a large area payable if the price of tin improved ; this subsequently happened. But the chief point of interest was that a rich main gutter, which had been running at right angles to the Government road, had at the spot where it met it, turned at a right angle and was running right under and along it. The road itself was built up on a very high embankment and cut the concession into two, crossing the depression—found in it here—for a length of about a mile.

Now, why I mention this is that it is an example of the arbitrary methods our Crown authorities so often adopt. As a matter of fact they had no right to build that road on that concession, neither was it a necessity, for an equally good road could have been built on a wide and good curve at the end of it. The only redress I could get was that they would build another road (but at our expense and still not avoiding the concession) parallel to and some little distance away from the old one ; this involved a twenty feet embankment. We had, therefore, to decide whether we would take the risk of building a new one and of removing the old one for whatever tin might still be found below the latter.

The Resident might have been the Czar himself ! I vainly pointed out that a road built on a wide curve was not only far less costly to construct (as it would follow the contour of a low hill) but in every way more suitable since it would be on solid ground and therefore not subject to the heavy cost of repairs to which the proposed road would be subjected by reason of the tropical rains. But, no ! like one of the old Czars of Russia who, when the plans of a

railway from Petrograd to Moscow were put before His Majesty for approval, took out a rule and drawing a straight line between the two towns said that was to be the line of the railway. So did our Authorities act here! Eventually the road was built and the tin removed, but most of the profits went to finance the construction of the new road.

I will not refer to other of my expeditions in these States save to mention one that I made to the north of the State of Perak. On my way there I stayed for a short time at Penang, which is a lovely island; and Penang itself—with its high hills rising just behind it, a health resort for Europeans coming from the hot Malay State plains—is a little gem of a place.

I remember so well crossing over from there to the Mainland in a little Chinese steamer with a deck-cargo of live duck; I camped on the Captain's bridge. Never shall I forget it for the sickly odours from the duck were indescribable. We left at about 3 p.m., and arrived next day at about noon at Kwala Kangsa; that night was a bad enough experience, but when the blazing sun beat down next day on those hundreds of live duck I was positively ill with the nausea caused thereby. Buckets of water were constantly thrown over them but nevertheless scores of them died from the insufferable heat.

Running up the river through the mangrove swamps we reached Kwala Kangsa where I took the train to Kinta, situated in a valley where are the tin mines I have before referred to. From here I started with a well-known planter, himself a civil engineer, for our expedition up the northern part of Perak. After a tedious journey we arrived up in the hilly country where was a large concession which was held by a Singapore firm and was thought to be sufficiently rich in tin to be treated by hydraulic methods.

As we rode into it, the caretaker's house, located down in the bottom of a small valley, loomed up, and as it came into sight I turned to my companion and said, "a regular fever trap, and if you did not tell me that an English man and his wife and baby were living there I would turn back and get a tent outfit to live in and pitch them up on the flanks of one of these hills." Entering the house, we found only the Malay boys about; the caretaker, his wife and baby were all down with fever. Between the two of us we had only one mosquito curtain and we tossed up who was to have it; the lot fell to myself. My companion, after showing me over the Concession and its boundaries, left me after a few days. On the road home he went down with fever and was for three months laid up with it in hospital; for twelve years he had

not had even a touch of it though before that he had suffered a good deal from it.

I remained here for some little time and was fortunate not to contract malaria myself. I laid out a hydraulic scheme for working this property and subsequently it was worked on a large scale for many years. It was here again that I came across a camp of Sakais, but found them less shy than those I met at the base of Mount Ophir.\* I made friends with them and both men and women used to come over and pay me visits when I was at work. They interested me greatly as being representatives of the aborigines of the Malay Peninsula. I found these people very intelligent, quick observers. Any change in my dress, for instance, however small, was immediately noted and remarked upon. Our empty bottles were what they prized most. I often tried to secure one of their blow-pipes (sumpitan) from them but never succeeded.

Once, when away on one of the hills surveying through the thick jungle for a road by which to bring in a pipe line, I was confronted with a tall goat; he quietly surveyed me and made off as quickly as he had appeared. Afterwards I learnt that I had seen one of the most highly prized animals now found on the Peninsula, for it was a wild one, and this species has become rare. At the time I thought it must have belonged to some Malays in the neighbourhood, but the Malay name for it, which I have now forgotten, confirmed its origin.

A rogue-elephant was reported to be in the neighbourhood, and my Malays were always very timid lest it should appear, for we had come across its tracks. A rogue-elephant is one that has been turned out of a herd and it is believed by some Malays that this is on account of its having gone mad.

The caretaker suffered from fever the whole time I was there but his wife and baby both recovered, though they were white, anæmic-looking creatures; I could not help but feel sorry for these poor fellow-country folk, living such lonely desolate lives, with not a white soul anywhere near them here, where they had been for months. What made him choose the site on which he had built the bungalow was a puzzle, for not a breath of air could get near it, and it was about as bad a one as could be found. In a malarial country the best sites for houses are just a little way down the flanks of a hill or a little below their crests. My experience has been that to erect them right on the crest is nearly, if not quite, as bad as building them at the base. In those days we had no idea that the mosquito (anopheles) was the carrier of the malaria germ;

\* See *Incidents in the Life of a Mining Engineer*.

why the top of the hill is unhealthy is now easily explained, for there pools of water are apt to collect which make good breeding places for the mosquitoes, while on the flanks of the hill the ground is better drained ; again, on top of the hill, there is every chance of catching any cool currents of air that may be circulating about : they cool down one's heated system suddenly and are far from being beneficial to it. In West Africa we long ago found out that the top of the hill was not the best place for a house, though anyone would naturally have thought that it should have been.

At another time I was located near Kwala Lumpur ; it was then a place where white women and children were not to be found, but on revisiting it a few years later I found that the town, with its many pretty bungalows, had quite a large number living there. A little way out of the town was the country club-house with its tennis-courts and gardens around it. Here the ladies and children used to drive out in the latter part of the afternoon, while their husbands and young men joined them later. Some played tennis, others whist—for bridge had not then come in—while a band played outside ; and about 7.30 p.m. all would drive back to their own quarters for dinner. It was so different from the old days when the " Spotted Dog " was the only " Club " and only place to retire to—so-called on account of its not being confined to white members only. I have jotted down a few of the experiences of those days, but others have escaped my memory, for many a journey I made on foot, and many a night I camped out amid scenes similar to those which I have described. Of technical experiences which have since proved of great service to me I have not spoken, but although I have omitted them they were not any the less valuable.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### DUTCH WEST BORNEO.

FROM the Malay Peninsula I will pass on to an expedition I made to Dutch West Borneo (also previous to going to South Africa) and later on to two others, one to British North Borneo, and the other to Dutch East Borneo.

Before leaving Singapore I learnt that my mission was to be a somewhat extended one, as I was first to visit Pontianac, the capital of Dutch West Borneo, and get into touch with its Governor who resided there. Thence I had to visit some rather large concessions, originally Chinese-owned and worked at places known as Montrado, Boedock and Bani. I had also to visit some of the hill-Dyak camps and find out all I could about certain gold mines they were supposed to be working. I was given letters of introduction to the Dutch Governor and to the Manager of the Mines. I was warned to take a frock-coat and to call on the Governor in it.

Leaving Singapore once more—and as I look back now how many times have I not sailed in and out of that port!—after three or four days we entered the Kapuas, a large river coming down from the interior; and after a few hours steaming up one of its mouths we reached Pontianac. From our Captain I learnt that there was no hotel here, not even a Chinese one, but the Steamship Company's Agent, a Chinaman, kindly offered to take care of my baggage for the day. We had arrived a little before noon, the hour of the Governor's reception. So, arrayed in a black frock coat and with a solar helmet, I marched off under a tropical sun to His Excellency's house. Opposite it was a long, wide walk where all the world and his wife paraded up and down in the evening, and facing it was a high flag-staff planted exactly on the equator. I presented my letter and the Governor received me most cordially, and taking me into his study showed me some most perfectly drawn maps of the interior, blocked out into districts and sub-divided into areas suitable for estates, and to my surprise even showing the contour lines thereon. I exclaimed, "Your Excellency! I must confess my absolute ignorance, for I had always pictured the interior of this part of the country as a wild, unknown jungle," to which he replied that my supposition was a perfectly correct one. I asked him,

“how then was it possible to have such maps.” The explanation was that the Dutch Government in Java took care of the boys born of native women, the wives of the Dutch soldiers, sent them to school and educated them as surveyors. These, when qualified, entered a regiment whose occupation was to gradually explore and map out the interior. Sometimes they would be away as long as two years without returning to the coast. Two regiments had been engaged thus for years on what must have been slow and laborious work ; before any survey lines could be run out jungle paths had to be cut, in most cases to survey and plot contours of even one square mile. Yet here was evidence of many years’ work, and I asked His Excellency again what possible use such maps could be, to which he replied “perhaps not of much service to this generation, but if not, to future ones.”

His Excellency then entered into the object of my visit and gave me a great deal of information about the old Chinese mining-works, and the causes that had led to their decay. Then he gave me a little worldly counsel on Dutch etiquette and from him I learnt that during the afternoon I should call on the leading officials and officers of the garrison, and that he was quite sure that one of them would offer to put me up. With a list of their names in order of precedence I left him. During the afternoon I paid my calls and left my card on those not at home. Several offered to put me up ; no doubt they had been asked by the Governor to do so, but having already accepted an invitation from one of them I gratefully declined the rest, but accepted their invitation to their club. Of the military men whom I met there, there was not one who could not speak English, and almost all spoke very good English.

That evening as I sat at dinner with my kind host I received an invitation from the Governor to attend a *Conversazione* at Government House that evening at 9.30 p.m. On arriving there I was introduced to a number of Dutch ladies, but, unlike the men, few of them spoke English. About 10 p.m. we went down to a so-called light refreshment which, coming after a good dinner, was more in the nature of a second one than of a light repast. There was, too, no refusing what was put before me and wine was offered with equal liberality. After supper we divided up into whist parties. My host, who was putting me up, two ladies and myself formed a set. and played together until 1.30 a.m. when we broke up and made our adieus to the Governor and each other. The scene was a brilliant one, the ladies being dressed in quite the latest Paris décolleté fashions, while the officers in their gay-coloured uniforms gave colour to it. The whist as played by them was not unlike a



combination of bridge and whist, as each suit had the same value as in bridge, and the one next to the dealer declared the trump suit ; thus hearts counted eight, diamonds six, clubs four and spades two.

Early next morning I went out for a walk at about 6.30 a.m., as is the custom in the East ; as I passed out by the garden gate two white women crossed my path each carrying a coloured parasol ; they were hatless but attired in a light kind of dressing-jacket or "Baju," with "Sarongs" girding their loins and just reaching to the knees, with their legs bare and feet in native sandals. I mistook them for the wives of the Dutch soldiers quartered here, and dressed as they were in native garments I passed them by and proceeded to explore the town, for until then I had not had time to do so.

My astonishment was great to find that this solitary town was laid out most prettily with a perfect network of canals running through it, and with well-constructed roads which were lined with shady trees running along their borders. On account of its canal system Pontianac is often called the Venice of the East. The Dutch residents' bungalows with their spacious verandahs or "stoups" surrounded by pretty little gardens, in many of which were grass plots, formed a picturesque contrast to the ordinary native *attap*-roofed houses. I had never before seen turf-grass growing in such high latitudes and I was somewhat astonished to find that it was possible to grow it. The grass was kept well watered, and was protected from the sun in the heat of the day by light bamboo mats covering it—the duty of every gardener. For a clean, pretty, tropical town, Pontianac stands out pre-eminently in my mind.

On my return about 8 a.m., I was greeted by my host in a towering rage, for as I entered the house I heard him say, "Like all you damned English, because the ladies you met last night were not dressed after your own ideas this morning you refused to acknowledge them, and went out of your way to be rude and snub them, besides being offensive to your host." For the moment I could not think what he meant. So I replied, "You do give me a bad character, but why? I give you my word of honour I have not the remotest idea what you refer to." Then he said, "I saw you refuse to take off your hat this morning as you left the house to the two ladies you played whist with last night." "Oh!" I exclaimed, "surely they were not the same two ladies? they looked too delightfully cool and airy to be the same; I assure you I never for one moment recognized them as the same ladies: no wonder you are angry, and so should I be if I were in your shoes."

He calmed down, and we discussed the whole matter and all ended well, for he apologized to me instead of I to him. I begged of him to see the two ladies and carry my apologies for my apparent rudeness. To see the two ladies in décolleté gowns overnight, and in the morning dressed à la Javanese, oh! what a contrast! Can it be wondered at that I did not for one moment suppose them to be the same two most charming and entertaining ladies, for ladies they were in every sense.

After a tub we sat down to breakfast and discussed the pros and cons of ladies dressing in native garb. He told me that the governess to the Governor's children was the only Dutch woman who refused to conform to Dutch Eastern custom, and that consequently the women led her a devil of a life. She was young, had a good figure, and was very good-looking, and secretly I admired her for her courage in standing up against the whole community in this respect. The Sarong to the native is a becoming garment, but anything but attractive to a European lady, and I marvel at any woman adopting a fashion so utterly unsuited to her. I am told that in Batavia in the mornings the ladies may be seen driving about in this light and airy costume.

My friend was afterwards most kind, most affable, and did everything to make the few days I spent here pleasant. No signs of his sudden outburst of wrath appeared again. I had to wait for the regular Singapore mail-boat on which were a few things for the mine; hence my detention. The Governor again came to my aid in helping me to get away by ordering one of the Chinese merchants here to take me up the coast to a landing near Bankai Head, where was a small Dutch fort. This was the nearest route to Montrado, my first destination. The Governor further provided me with letters to the several small forts I might visit in the course of my travels.

During my visit I am afraid to say how many times I crossed and re-crossed the Equator, for in the evenings we used to walk up and down past the flag-staff, and on each occasion we passed from the Northern to the Southern hemisphere, or vice versa. I once made an old sea captain very wrath by telling him, when he had been boasting of the number of times he had crossed the Equator, that I had also done so, but many, many more times than he; he at once said, "Well, it was in Africa or South America," and on my replying "no," but that he was correct in his surmise that it had been on the land and not on the sea, he was angry and said I was fooling him. But he forgot that the Equator passed through Borneo and the Celebes as well as through South America and Africa.

By the Governor's assistance, as already stated, I was enabled to engage a steam-launch to take me up the coast. Its owner—a Chinese merchant—had refused to let me hire it save at an exorbitant figure; when his Excellency intervened and commandeered the boat on my behalf, I paying the crew only. This was a very good example of Dutch rule and the Chinese merchant was well paid out for his avarice. After dark our small steam-launch left this little Venice of the East; it was a very dark night, and it was surprising how those Chinese sailors found their way down through the maze of sandbanks which necessitated much winding about. After getting out to sea we crept along the coast, and at about 10 a.m. next morning we were off Singkawang, where was a Dutch fort with a few officers and native troops.

Dutch Borneo is divided into two residences, the South and the West. It was in the latter I had to travel and the Resident or Governor resides at Pontianac. It is again divided up into States, and I had now entered into one of them known as Sambas. This State is ruled by the Sultan of Sambas, at whose court resides a Dutch Assistant Resident. The Chinese population, however, of which there are many thousands, are directly under the latter's rule. The native population, the tenure of land and mineral rights, are under the Sultan, with the exception that he is not allowed to sell or lease property to foreigners without their first obtaining the sanction of the Netherlands Indies Government, and for this application has to be made to Batavia. The population of Dutch West Borneo was estimated to be between 350,000 and 400,000, and was made up of Malay races, Dyaks, and Chinese. The Malay races mostly inhabit the coast-line and river-banks, unlike the Chinese and Dyaks who are well distributed, but mostly inland.

The earliest records of this part of Borneo go back as far as the tenth century. In the year 976 A.D. we hear of presents being sent from here to the Emperor of China, and of the gold dresses of the envoys, but not till the latter part of the eighteenth century did the Chinese begin to arrive in great numbers; then they soon spread themselves all over Sambas and likewise over the neighbouring States, driving the Dyaks into the hills.

Chinese "Kongsees," or Companies, were formed at this period in China to carry on immigration into this country with the object of working for gold. These soon became so rich and powerful that they defied both the Sultan and the Dutch authorities, and for many years carried on a war against them holding their own until the year 1854 when the Dutch determined to put them down,

and finally succeeded in doing so, though only after a three years' struggle.

From that date the gold industry, which had reached very large proportions, steadily declined; whether from the fact that the "Kongsees" were ruined and the influential Chinese driven out of the country, or from the gradual exhaustion of the auriferous alluvial deposits, is a question in dispute; in all probability both causes led to the decay of what had been a flourishing and important industry. In the aggregate hundreds of miles of water-ditches—constructed by the Chinese along the hill-sides to bring in water for their gold placer-workings situated on the flats below them,—still stand as silent witnesses to the patient industry with which these people worked these mines in those days. Rarely do they seem to have attempted to mine hard rock; one of the very few places where there is evidence of their having done so was at Montrado. Only a few thousands of Chinese are now scattered about, and most of them still continue to support themselves by gold-washing.

From Sinkawang there is a military road, or a bridle-track rather than a road, that runs via Montrado to Benkajang and thence to the Sibalow river which again forms a highway connected by the little Sambas river with the town and fort of Sambas; along this route I traversed this State with a few short journeys made off it.

The physical features of the country are quite out of the common and so are perhaps worth dilating upon a little. There appear to be no well-defined mountain chains, but a series of isolated mountain-like ridges, forming as it were a number of outliers of pre-existing high mountain ranges. These island-like mountains rise abruptly from amidst a hill-country encircling them at their base and filling up the hollows on the sides that would ordinarily separate their peaks or ridges one from the other. The hills, again, have no definite valleys or defined watersheds, but look like a confused jumble of round eminences, seldom more than 200 feet to 300 feet in height, and these are partially encircled by a zone of low, flat tablelands tailing off into flat marshy country. In their internal structure these island-like mountains form themselves into two or sometimes three parallel ridges, connected with each other by a lower one running at right angles to them forming an arrangement like the letter "H." The country may be divided into four distinct zones. (1) The mountains rising from 500 feet to 4,000 feet. (2) The hill-land rising from 50 feet to 500 feet. (3) The dry flat land. (4) The low, flat, marsh land. There are therefore no well-defined watersheds. Taking the Chinese districts of West Borneo, the rivers are found there to run to the four different

points of the compass and are numerous and mostly navigable for small craft. As I have already said, I have never in all my travels come across similar topographical features. I believe that the islands of Banca and Billiton, the two great tin-producing islands off Sumatra and opposite West Borneo, have the same physical features, and the same geological formation ; but, curiously enough, while they produce tin in the form of " Cassiterite " or the oxide of that metal and no gold, Dutch West Borneo produces gold but no tin.

With my letter of introduction I called on the commandant of the Fort. I was immediately taken by him to the Club and presented to the officers who, as is their custom, had gathered there before their tiffin hour. I was persuaded to stay over the following day with them, and everything was done to make my visit a pleasant one.

An amusing story was told me of a recent event ; a young officer lately out from home was sent with about twenty native soldiers up country to march to Benkajang where there is another Dutch fort with a comparatively large garrison. When about fifteen miles out he was surrounded by Chinese who were everywhere firing off their crackers, hidder in the tall grass ; and as these made a noise similar to the firing of rifles, he believed he had been ambushed and beat a hasty retreat ; whereas the Chinese in reality were simply paying honour to him as the representative of the military ! Poor young fellow, his chagrin when he found out his mistake was great, added to which was the chaff from his fellow officers. Fortunately he never fired a shot on the innocent Chinese but the " crackers " were the cause of his recall back to Holland and disgrace. I have so often experienced these crackers being exploded all round me that I can well imagine how easy it was for him to have believed he had been ambushed.

To Montrado, my first objective, was a distance of about twenty-three miles, and having got a number of coolies together to carry my baggage and stores, I left the Fort one evening after dinner, intending to make the march in the cooler air of the night. I had no interpreter with me, neither did my coolies understand a word of Malay or English. I had gone not more than a few miles when we came upon a Chinese hut—down went all the loads and my coolies sat down and calmly began smoking and talking. I could not move them. Later on they got a good meal here, the occupants of the house having prepared it while they waited. Once again we started, and how many times they thus downed their loads and rested I am afraid to say ! I tried to get them to go on,

using the little Malay I knew, hoping one of them might understand, but to no purpose, and it was not till 8 a.m. next morning (eleven hours after starting) that we arrived at Montrado. As I was not expected for about another week or fortnight I took the two Englishmen in charge here by surprise, and then it was that I learnt the cause of our delay on the road. The chief word I had used in Malay to hurry them up—"jalan"—sounded like the most insulting word I could have used in these coolies' patois. They told the manager that I was the worst white man they had ever been under, and that I was no good and a bad man; but when I heard this I took good care when I paid them off to give them an extra good "dash" (gift) and no doubt they changed their minds about me.

At Montrado the camp was composed mainly of Chinese. The servants were Malays from Singapore. During my visit here, I made a few trips to some of the neighbouring small placer-gold-mines which are being worked by the Chinese themselves; the only pumps they used were their old treadmill-worked ones, set on an incline up which the wooden buckets scoop the water; what is so ingenious about them is that there is not a nail or scrap of iron used in their construction. A rice mill, also of simple construction, was worked by a small stream of water falling into a deep bucket, set at one end of a long timber pivoted at its centre and with a wooden pestle set beneath it at the other end; as the bucket filled with water down went the beam, and, when at the bottom of its stroke, the bucket tipped, emptied its contents, and down went the other end of the beam with its pestle into a wooden mortar in which was the paddy. Thus it kept on see-sawing to and fro, and with each stroke the paddy was hulled, leaving the rice. This machine though simple, was effectively doing its work slowly but steadily, needing only a little boy to feed in the paddy and remove the rice; and here, again, not a nail or a piece of iron was used on its structure.

The Chinese men were wearing a conical shaped hat of plaited straw with a pattern. Two of these I carried away and have to this day. Their special interest was in the design of the pattern—a very, very old one not found now in China—and by it they claim that it has evidently been handed down from one generation to another, having, it is thought, been brought over from China about the latter part of the eighth century.

The Assistant Manager here had been married some years ago to a Malay woman, whose mother lived with them. The old lady worked a small hand-loom and made silk Sarongs, one of which I bought from her; it had taken her three months to manufacture. It is of a deep crimson silk with a broad, embroidered

pattern worked in fine gold thread. About a year afterwards her son-in-law was killed and his head cut off by a robber Dyak marauding party, and the Manager was soon afterwards drowned while trying to cross a river in flood.

From here I went on to Boedock by way of Bakwan, a small village on the banks of the Sibalow river and connected by it with the port of Pemangkat. From this port "Tonkongs," or a kind of Chinese barge carrying twenty to fifty tons of cargo, were able to get up to Bakwan. Thence a fair road ran for eight miles to Boedock, where I found a good camp and a small gold mill. Some eight miles beyond the Bawang mountains a steep rugged range stood out south eastwards, and to the north east was Skadan, the two mountains being 4,400 feet and 2,000 feet high respectively. The general landscape, as one looked across the intervening flats (the former sites of extensive old Chinese gold workings) was varied and picturesque. Here and there a few small workings were still to be seen.

On the hills of Boedock itself were the remains of some old workings. One of these, Sun Tian, was an open cut 450 feet wide, 800 feet long, and about 12 to 30 feet in height. Another, Ha Keuw, was very similar but only 200 feet long. At the base of this hill on its northern side at a place near Koh-San-Pon-Pounka (note the name) we sunk a shaft thirty-five feet deep by means of two Chinese Tee O's, or "Whips," to bale out the water which was coming up at the rate of thirty gallons per minute. The Tee O's are used not only throughout China for raising water from wells, or from rivers for irrigation purposes, but they are seen constantly in Russia and throughout Siberia, and are used in a similar manner. These were forty feet in height, and each was formed of a forty feet heavy pole stuck upright in the ground; near the top was pivoted across it a longer but more slender pole; at one end of the latter a large sized wooden bucket was attached by a short piece of bamboo rope, while at the other end a heavy stone was lashed in order to balance the bucket. When the end with the stone attached to it is brought down to the base of the pole its higher end stands high above the upright pole, and the Tee O is out of gear; but when put to work the bucket end is allowed to swing down, and, dropping into the well, fills, and is then raised by the men at the other, or stone weighted, end, by pulling on the bamboo ropes attached to it, when up comes the bucket full of water! As many as twelve men at a time can be put on to a big one like that described, and for-unwatering shallow shafts, or wells, or for raising water from a river to fill irrigation ditches, they are

(though crude) very effective and easily built structures as make-shifts to take the place of pumps. Here again no iron need be used in their construction.

Near Tim Gim at the base of the hill I found some fossiliferous beds, carrying two dwts. of gold per ton, exposed in the bottom of a shaft fifty feet deep. Some of these fossils I subsequently brought home and gave to the British Museum. Several years afterwards I was surprised to receive from the head of the Geological Department a small pamphlet upon them illustrating the fossils themselves. I had received a letter of thanks from him and expected to hear no more about them ; but it shows how closely geologists watch every detail likely to throw light on the geological history of this world's past, no matter where found or in how out of the way a place ; and any clues are thus carefully noted and co-ordinated with others.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

### HILL DYAK VILLAGES.

ON leaving Boedock I started upon what I consider was the most interesting part of my expedition, namely a visit to some of the hill Dyak villages, where I stayed and lived with the natives while examining some of their open gold workings. As we marched in one afternoon through a jungle path that led nearly to the top of a high hill, the first signs of life were the sounds of a deep reverberation of Javanese gongs. Our presence had been observed as we came along and the Dyaks were beating the gongs to call the men in and to warn them of possible danger. As we emerged from the forest growth of trees and jungle we came upon a large clearing, in the centre of which stood an enormous barn-like house. The house was raised on piles some six feet to seven feet above the ground, and built of bamboo with an *attap* roofing. Beneath it were numerous pigs; for the pig is not an abomination to these people as it is with the Malays who, like the Mahometans, look upon it with loathing. The Dyaks are heathen, or, more aptly expressed, "Nature Worshippers."

Such a house is called "Kampong," and in it were living some thirty families. Through its centre ran a broad wide aisle where the young unmarried men slept and where cooking was carried on. Off this aisle on either side were a series of small rooms, in each of which lived a family. A light bamboo door was slid along and served to shut the family off. On the outer side of these rooms the steep roof sloped down, and through it an opening led to little platforms constructed outside them. In the very centre of this house was swung up a crude little wooden model of a boat with the mast and sail; in this was supposed to live their guardian spirit, and apparently the boat itself was worshipped. It had been amongst them as long as the oldest could remember. Now when my stay was over and I was coming away, a Council of the Elders was held, and at it it was decided to hand this boat over to me, and as they presented it to me they offered their wishes that it would take care of me and bring me good fortune. I asked them what they would do if harm came to them through parting with it; but so far as I could understand them they thought that my influence over their guardian-spirit would still protect them though it was

parted from them. Whether it was a kindly action towards myself or some idea that I and their guardian spirit would look upon them we could not make out; any way, I have kept that crude little boat—it hangs up now in the summer-house of my garden, and though rude in structure and make it reminds me often of those days, and at least it was gratifying that I won their confidence sufficiently for them to repose their faith in me.

In the evening they used to gather round us, that is, myself and the General Manager of Montrado and Boedock who had accompanied me, and while I used to answer their questions and try to give them a fairy story of the great outside world I would in turn extract from them all the information I could obtain. Their lives were simple ones, spent mainly in growing rice and setting traps for small animals. They had their old stories of the head-hunting days, but these they had long since been forced to give up. Only rarely now do any such raids take place, and they are confined to the interior of Sarawak, and British North Borneo. So far as I could learn, too, the Dutch had almost entirely stamped this custom out.

The women-folk were the hard workers; all day they would be out in the paddy fields, and at night come in carrying great loads of paddy on their backs in curious, narrow, elongated, conical-shaped baskets, made out of cane and bark. Then they would set to work and cook their evening meal.

Whether during my visit they were feasting in honour of it or not, it is difficult to say, but they always seemed to have plenty of pork and rice. The smell of the cooking was not savoury, and fortunately they did not press any of it upon me, probably thinking that we, like the Malays, eschewed anything in the shape of pork. They all usually rose one hour after sunrise. We, however, used to get up with the sun and go for a walk, getting back after most of them had left for the day's work. In another Kampong near by they possessed a very fine set of Javanese gongs, the tones of which were deep and sonorous and could be heard far away in the distance. These were about the only possessions they had, besides what the jungle produced, except that a few had Sarongs made up out of Manchester goods.

The clothing of the women was quaint, perhaps the quaintest I ever came across—a pretty cloth tied tightly round their hips and, surmounting it, girdles of cane made of Rotans dyed a bright cherry red and tightly encircling their bodies from their hips to well up under their arm pits; their arms and legs were covered with brass bangles attached to which were brass and bead trinkets.

On gala days many wore in their hair earrings and combs of massive beaten gold. The effect of these brightly-coloured hoops gave them a ludicrous appearance, but what won't women folk adopt as a fashion to make themselves look conspicuous? To those who can remember the huge bustles and chignons it is not surprising to see these uncivilized creatures adopting similar customs. In Africa I have seen some of the native belles so covered in beads that they must have weighed many pounds and have been exceedingly irksome to carry, but as they attracted attention the inconvenience did not matter!

At about ten p.m. all were asleep usually, while my friend and self would sit up talking often late into the night. We camped in a small area allotted to us in the Central Hall.

I will not go into any description of their old mines save to say that in process of time some of them had assumed quarry-like proportions, indeed, some were huge; but their size was no indication of their value, for whatever gold they obtained from them was to the good. It cost them nothing but a little work which, from what I saw, was put in by the men-folk more as a pastime than from any need for it.

A few miles from our Kampong was another settlement of these people where two weddings were to be held; the Chiefs or Heads of it sent us an invitation which we gladly accepted, as few Europeans; I suppose, ever get the chance of seeing a Dyak wedding and that a double event. In fact, I had no idea until I witnessed one that they had so formal and ceremonious a marriage observance. It was an exceptionally hot morning when we started to go over to see the ceremonies, so that by the time we arrived there we were simply drenched through with our own perspiration, and I am afraid we cut a sorry figure with our wet, white clothes. On our arrival we found several large Kampongs; climbing up the notched pole which served as a ladder we entered the largest, where we were introduced to the Headman, and the brides and bridegrooms (for it was a double event). Unlike the Malays, the Dyaks do not seclude their women. They had pulled down the bamboo partitions of the family rooms and made a big central hall reaching across the whole width of the house. All sorts of little sweatmeats and basins of rice were handed round of which we partook before the ceremony began. We estimated that quite 300 people were present.

One of the two brides was dressed in a rich silk and gold-embroidered Sarong, with gold bangles, on the back of which were set massive gold shields about the size of a crown. Round her

neck were suspended some beaten gold ornaments, and her hair was combed back like a Chinese woman's coiffure, and adorned with several large combs of beaten gold. All this jewellery was of gold extracted from their own mines and was in some way coloured a deep, rich, reddish hue. The women visitors, many of whom were ornamented with a great deal of similar jewellery, had largely adopted the Malay costume of the Sarong for the occasion, but silver, brass or red rotan girdles, trinkets of brass, silver coins and armlets of brass and beads also adorned their persons.

The bride and bridegroom faced each other, squatting on their haunches native-fashion, while the Priest addressed them and I believe gave them good advice and counsel; but as my friend had been tired with his walk over, and as the heat and stuffiness were so great that he did not come in till near the end, so I had to guess at what was being said. As the ceremony proceeded the bride donned a large gold circlet or crown which was placed over and around her head. At the end of the ceremony the two were led hand in hand by the priest to the verandah or stage, overlooking the valley. Here the priest stood and called on the mountains, the hills, the valleys, the plains, the trees, the waters, the winds, and all life to witness the ceremony and to make the lives of the wedded couple fruitful. At this point he scattered rice to the winds. Then retiring, the ceremony was over; it had lasted more than an hour. In the same manner the second couple were married.

Afterwards the crowd began to form in groups and chatter, when we bid our hosts good-bye and wished the newly-married couples good fortune, long life and happiness. We had a long walk before us and therefore did not stay till the end of the festivities, the preparations for which were evidently those for a great feast. I omitted to say that the Priest as he threw the rice broadcast into space also threw some over the bridegroom and bride. As we returned back to our Kampong we discussed what the origin might be of our own throwing of rice over the bride and bridegroom as they leave the house.

Before leaving I bought two paddy baskets and a quantity of the red girdles. The former I still have, lined with tin and weighted at their narrow ends with lead; they make two good umbrella stands, but the girdles in course of time have been lost.

We also visited two other Kampongs near which were some Dyak mines; from them we proceeded to Benkajang; and a few miles further on were some Dutch mines or their beginnings.

The Dutch Fort at Benkajang is well-known in Borneo and Java,

as its climate has a wonderful curative effect in cases of "Beriberi." Many officers recovering from this disease (acquired in Achee) were sent here to recuperate. As usual, we found the Dutch officers most hospitable and entertaining. The barracks of the native troops which we visited were kept scrupulously clean, and it was strange to see the rows of narrow beds; alongside of each a bamboo mat was spread and on these were camped the native wives and children of the respective occupants of the beds. We did not stay long as there was comparatively little mining-work to inspect.

Thence by native boat, or prow, we made our way to the port of Sambas. Here was another Dutch Fort and the Palace of the Sultan of the Sambas. We had a very interesting time there, what with the Dutch Fort and the Sultan's hospitality; the latter consisted largely of eating and feasting on curries of one sort and another. The Sultan's band was worth listening to and must not be forgotten. Thus I returned to the coast once more, after a varied experience in traversing open country, which was partly under cultivation or overgrown again, with clearings for Chinese-worked, alluvial mines sprinkled through it. The extensive view of the open country around was very beautiful; at other times one's way lay through the original primeval forest, with its ever changing aspects, so full of curious forms of life, making up an experience of the charms and drawbacks of which it is difficult to convey a real idea. The silence at mid-day was a remarkable characteristic of these forests. The great fallen, giant trees covered with sprouting ferns, the dense undergrowth or jungle where the timber is less thick, and the frequent, lovely dells—so quiet amidst great towering straight stemmed trees—all tended to give an atmosphere of the sublime, and of the majesty of that Power which gives such an abundance of life and in such an infinite variety of forms that one is brought into close touch not only with God, as the Creator of all Nature, ever breathing vegetable and animal life, but also with the Mind of the Infinite Who allows His created man to enter into His purposes and to feel His very Presence. There is something sublime, as I have already said, in these great forests which seem to bring one into an environment of awe and wonder; at times it is rudely broken by running against a red ant's nest, when these spiteful little beasts get under one's clothes and make their venomous little bites felt sharp and painful; fortunately their effects do not last long, though at the time they often compel one to strip and get into Adam's garb in order to get rid of them.

The damp, sweltering heat, and the clambering over fallen trunks

make any attempt to force the pace through the forest fatiguing ; but, by taking one's time and going along fairly leisurely, a journey through it is one that leaves an imprint never to be wiped out. A Dyak bridge (constructed of rotan ropes, swung across a swiftly-flowing river, and between its two high banks) is worth notice. It was quite the work of an engineer, with its two main cables from which was swung (by smaller rotans hanging from them) a bamboo framework, on which was laid a light flooring of bamboos, making a narrow roadway by which to cross over. I started to walk across it, but I had no sooner taken a few steps than the whole structure began to sway to and fro, so that the struggle across it was a feat worthy of a Blondin.

Many such episodes of one sort and another often befell me, so that to jot them all down would become wearisome, for, after all, when written, there is a certain sameness about them. Of the rivers, with their extraordinary, marvellous, and continually changing pictures of indescribable beauty and enchantment : of the primeval forests with the sublime depths of meaning hidden in them ; and of the lovely and picturesque beauty of the open country as seen from the hillside—of these I have written, but no words of mine can convey more than a tithe of their realities. I admit that the effect upon one often depends upon the physical condition one is in ; if tired out (as so often is the case) or if pestered by ants or leeches, or other torments, the impression on the mind is anything but enchanting ; but to start out in good health, and not to overdo it, and to jog along at a steady pace (allowing oneself leisure enough to observe all that is around one) is an experience, I repeat, which surpasses one's highest imagination of the majestic beauty, grandeur and marvellous loveliness contained in these scenes.

Upon butterflies, insects, birds, and animals I have hardly touched ; but I must just refer to the Orang-Utan, for here is the home of this anthropoid ape. The many native stories about Orang-Utans are endless, but the natives do not like them, probably because they are great robbers of their much cherished Durian fruit. I never came across one in its wild state, but several times I saw captive ones. They are so ugly that I never could bring myself to take an interest in them. Orang-Utan in the native language means man or wild man.

During my stay in the country I happened to meet a party of natives returning home after having accompanied two European orchid-hunters in an expedition that had lasted two years. I hired these men for a month to collect orchids for me and to bring them down to Sambas. Here I found them, and told the poongoola,

or headman, to pack them just as their white masters had done. The trophies filled two huge packing-cases, and I shipped them home via Singapore to an aunt of my wife's, whose head gardener was supposed to be some sort of authority upon orchids, but alas ! when the packing-cases were opened there was only the packing or fibre they were sent in, the orchids having been abstracted. The mystery was never solved. I saw the cases nailed down and shipped on board the steamer that carried me to Singapore.

At Sambas I said goodbye to L., the General Manager of the mines I had visited. We had spent a pleasant time together ; he knew the natives well and spoke their different dialects ; little did I think that the deaths of Manager and Assistant were to be so tragic ; as already stated, the former was carried away while trying to cross a swift river and was drowned, the latter lost his life and head in an attack by marauding natives.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### HONG KONG TO CHEMULPO, COREA.

I WILL now return to my narrative of life in China. Previous to going down to the Federated Malay States, after my return from the Kuansi expedition, we made a trip to Corea. I was going alone but happening to meet the Governor, the late Sir Henry Blake, he said, "Ah! why not take your wife? she would enjoy it. At Chemulpo there is quite a decent hotel." This decided me, and on going home I told her to pack up and be ready to start on the morrow, for I knew she would love to go. My visit was to be in connection with a loan to the Government, and I had to report generally on any openings there might be for capital in the country.

We left Hong Kong one day at noon in a mail steamer and we were off Wu-sung on the evening of the fourth day; going up the river fourteen miles in the steamship company's tender, we found that the pilot had been one of General Gordon's lieutenants in the Taiping Rebellion.

We landed at Shanghai, at J. M. & Co's house, where we stayed; there we met "Morrison of the *Times*," as he used to be called. I remember that he was very keen on the question of the Canton Hankow railway, and was insistent that I should go up and look into the coal-fields along its route, which he believed had enormous potentialities. He was, perhaps, the one man out of many I met in China who seemed to have an intimate knowledge of China's great mineral resources and of her almost inexhaustible iron deposits in the neighbourhood of Hankow; and how true this has since proved to be! His description of the Santow Anthracite coal, and of a fine bitumous coal field south of it, near Suag Chou, and of the iron deposits, appealed to my mind as well worth looking into; but my orders were definite and were not to be changed.

Leaving Shanghai we crossed to Nagasaki, Japan. In Japan we stayed three weeks. Here we spent a few days with our friends, the H.'s, where we met Captain Jellicoe, now so famous, with whom we used to take country walks. A cousin of my wife's, well-known in China, turned up accidentally, and he advised us strongly to go to the Hot Springs at Onsen, to spend our three weeks' holiday in the hills amongst the Japanese, and not to go on the usual tourists' rounds, and this advice we decided to take.



A day or two before starting we all three took rickshaws and went across to Moji, a small fishing village about five miles distant ; and a delightful run it was along a good road bounded on either side for the greater part of its distance by a majestic bamboo forest. Our friend had previously written to have a sumptuous Japanese menu of fish prepared for us at Moji, and in a clean, spick and span little Japanese restaurant we sat down to course after course of fish cooked in various styles ; and I must not forget to mention the soup made from seaweed for which this part of Japan is renowned. It was our first introduction to Japan, and a delightful day it proved to be ; not only was everything new, but my wife's cousin added greatly to our enjoyment for he was naturally a jovial man and always full of fun, and he introduced Japan to us in his own racy way ; moreover, he knew the nation so well that he was able to point out to us the comical side of the national character, and the customs which specially differed from our own. When we returned tired that night, the tiredness was more from the fatigue of a day's laughter than from the journey itself.

Nagasaki has been so often described in books of travel that I shall not make any attempt at description, save to repeat that the harbour has the reputation of being the prettiest in the East.

Whilst walking in its streets one morning we came on three stalwart U.S. sailors who were ashore from a man-o'-war in the harbour. They were " three sheets in the wind " and shouted noisily, when a little Japanese policeman interfered, and on his making signs to them to be quiet one of the three hit him with his fist. The little man then blew his whistle and another one came running up and before the three sailors could realize what had happened the two Japanese policemen had them on their backs on the ground ; and with pieces of spun-yarn pulled out of their pockets they quickly bound their legs and arms ; some coolies were called and carried them off in this state to the police-station. It was all so rapidly done that neither myself nor my wife could make out exactly how these three men had been bound hand and foot before even a crowd had time to collect.

We left Nagasaki, I, my wife, little daughter, her Amah, and my Chinese boy Ah Sak (who accompanied me in all my travels), together with our cousin's Japanese valet, who came with us as our interpreter ; we all travelled by rickshaw with our baggage to Moji—not the large port of Moji, but the fishing village of that name. Here we embarked on a small steamer that took us up to Obama, some three hours' steaming. Obama is a great watering-place, renowned for its mineral waters and hot springs which rise

on the beach itself. We stayed here in a Japanese inn with a landlady who was one of the prettiest Japanese women we ever met ; she was tall, too, being much above the average height of these people. It was a charming little spot and with no Europeans staying here we had our first glimpses of real Japanese life. Then taking chairs (myself walking) we started out for Onsen, which lay above us some 2,500 feet up. On the way up we obtained some lovely views of the country round, and the walk of six to eight miles was a most enjoyable one. Our first view of Onsen was that of a little village near which a dense mist and fumes were arising from the many springs and fumeroles in its vicinity.

No foreigners were staying here—the season for them had passed, and we found ourselves the only ones here ; instead of going to one of the two hotels that tourists usually stay at, we chose one entirely frequented by Japanese, and there we took up our quarters for a ten days' visit. In the vicinity we discovered many lovely walks, and especially one up the extinct volcano at the base of which Onsen lies. From its summit the most indescribable panorama is spread before one's eyes, with numerous peaks of other extinct volcanoes, whilst seawards the many bays and inlets give a charm to the otherwise rugged aspect immediately around.

During this visit we stayed a day at quite a country inn ; it was a poor little one of its sort, but so clean and nice that it made up for the want of anything in the way of palatable food ; the food provided was very indifferent and quite of the peasant sort.

The people at Onsen, especially the women folk, were all so kind and attentive that the whole of our visit was a most enjoyable one, the one drawback was that the time slipped away all too quickly. The seething, boiling cauldrons were quite new to my wife, for she had never seen anything like them before, but notwithstanding their fascination it was the country and the country folk around in which our interest mostly lay, and we revelled in them. Our fair-haired little daughter was a great centre of attraction, and all sorts of little presents were showered upon her. She, too, reciprocated their attentions, for she had one marked characteristic in her life, namely, that she always made friends with those around her whether Kaffirs, Chinese, Japanese, or Indians ; all alike they seemed to interest her ; in this respect she took after her father and mother, and only once do I ever remember her to have shown any antipathy to anyone, and that was to her Indian Ayah.

We returned to Nagasaki and there we met a large number of American officers returning from the Philippine Islands, and from them we obtained a very good insight into all that had been going

on there. Taking a passage in an 800-ton Japanese steamer for Corea we bid good-bye to our friends.

Our first port of call was Moji. Moji is an important port as in its vicinity are numerous coal-mines, and here many ships call to coal. Across the narrow strait which leads into the world-renowned Inland Sea is the town of Shimonoseki, noted for its cutlery; it is an important trading port, though the mail steamers were unable to call in at it, on account of the strong current on that side of the Strait. The distance between Moji and Shimonoseki is about a mile. Moji is an unprepossessing town and is not dissimilar in this respect from most towns in a colliery district, but Shimonoseki, although with but one long straggling street, is a clean town, and easily visited from Moji as steam launches constantly ply to and fro.

As so little is known by us of the history of Japan I make no apology for inserting a short extract taken from D. H. Chamberlain and W. B. Mason's *Japan* which throws some light upon Corea. "Nothing is known concerning the origin of the Japanese people or the period at which they reached their present habitat. The dawn of trustworthy history, in the fifth century after Christ, finds the Mikadoes—Emperors claiming descent from the Sun Goddess Ama-terasu—already governing all Japan except the North, which was still occupied by the Aino aborigines, and Chinese civilisation beginning to filtre into what had hitherto been a semi-barbarous land. The chief pioneers of this civilisation were Buddhist priests from Corea. From that time forward, history consists, broadly speaking, in the rise of successive great families and chiefs, who, while always professing a nominal respect for the divine authority of the Mikado, practically usurp his powers and are the *de facto* rulers of the country. By the end of the twelfth century, the old absolutism had been converted into a feudalism of which Yoritomo, the successful leader of the Minamoto family or clan became the acknowledged head under the title of Shogun which closely corresponds in etymology and in meaning to the Latin Imperator. Thus was inaugurated the dual system of government which lasted down to the year 1868—the Mikado supreme in name, powerless but dwelling in a gilded captivity at the old capital Kyoto, the Shogun, with his great feudatories, his armed retainers and his well-filled exchequer, ruling the whole Empire from his New Capital in Eastern Japan—first Kamakura, then Yedo. During the latter period of the nominal supremacy of the Minamoto family of Shoguns, the real power was in the hands of their chief retainers, the Hojo family—the political arrangement

thus becoming a triple one. The rule of the Hojo was rendered memorable by the repulse of the Monghl Fleet sent by Kublai Khan to conquer Japan, since which time Japan has never been invaded by any foreign foe. The Ashikaga line of Shoguns grasped the power which had fallen from the Hojo's hands, and distinguished themselves by the patronage of the arts. The second half of the sixteenth century was a period of anarchy during which two great soldiers of fortune who were not Shoguns—Nobunaga and Hideyoshi—successively rose to supreme power. Hidayoshi even went so far as to conquer Corea, and to meditate the conquest of China, an enterprise which was, however, interrupted by his death in A.D. 1598. Tokagawa Ieyasu, Hidayoshi's greatest general, then succeeded in making Japan his own, and founded a dynasty of Shoguns who ruled the land in profound peace from 1603 to 1868. Among the means resorted to for securing this end were the ejection of the Catholic missionaries and the closing of the country to foreign trade. Nagasaki was the only place in the Empire at which any communication with the outer world was permitted, no European nation but the Dutch was allowed to trade there, and even Dutch commerce was restricted within narrow limits. At last, in 1853 the Government of the United States sent a fleet under the command of Commodore Perry to insist on the abandonment of the Japanese policy of isolation. This act of interference from the outside gave the *coup de grace* to the Shogunate, which had previously been weakened by the internal discontent. It fell, and in its fall dragged down the whole fabric of mediæval Japanese civilisation. On the other hand the Mikado was restored to absolute power which had belonged to his ancestors centuries before, and Europeanism (if one may so phrase it) became supreme in every branch of thought and activity. The natural outcome of this has been the Europeanisation of the monarchy itself. Not only has the Court adopted foreign manners and etiquette, it has granted a Constitution modelled on that of Prussia, and the Diet, as it is termed, meets yearly. The tendency of this body is to grow rapidly more and more radical."

It was soon after sunset when we caught our first glimpse of Corea, as we entered its most southern port, that of Fusan. In the dim twilight we could see the silhouettes of white-robed figures flitting about. In the background stood out the bare outlines of high hills, over their summits the moon was beginning to show itself. The whole scene was as if we had passed into the "shades, and this feeling was emphasised after we had dropped anchor by the silence around. It was a weird experience; what the white

figures were we could not discern, but we were soon to learn—they were Coreans dressed in white. On going up early on deck, as the sun rose, the picture before us was one of dreamy loveliness ; the hills on the western side were all aglow as the first rays of the sun fell upon them, and clothed in a green carpet, whilst the harbour, with its curious craft seen sailing about on its blue waters, formed one of those contrasts in light and colour which call forth all one's admiration of nature's artistic effects. On shore was the town, with its stunted little houses, as if built for a nation of dwarfs, and crowds of their white-robed, black-hatted inhabitants were now plainly visible.

We were still in the land of the living and had not entered the land of the " shades," and as we went on shore and walked through the crowded streets we had cause to realize that we were still in the midst of humanity, for our olfactory senses were sorely tried. Nevertheless the silent bustle of these people, busy marketing for their day's supplies at numerous open little shops—where the commodities and wares were openly displayed—gave a zest to our curiosity, and all sorts of things we had never seen before were exposed to view. Hats of various shapes and patterns were lying about in piles, rolls and rolls of grass-lawn silk, and rude pottery of all descriptions. Then there were the wonderful brass shops, with their old-world pattern candlesticks, from each of which hung a pair of snuffers, while a rod affixed to the back of each supported a butterfly with wings spread open behind the flame of the candle to act as reflectors. Again there were numerous brass bowls of different sizes with neatly-fitting covers, brass spoons and brass chop-sticks. These brass bowls (not of silver) form the service plate for the family's meals. The largest is the rice bowl ; a medium-sized one the soup-bowl ; while a number of smaller ones are those in which the several little relishes which are eaten with the rice are served up. Every Corean family in these days possessed a set of these and many were heirlooms handed down from one generation to another, but each bowl for its own particular use and pattern has always remained of the same form.

In the silk-shops were rows of brilliantly-coloured silks and a great variety of different coloured skeins of silk. In the basket-shops were all kinds of roughly-plaited bags and baskets, and what looked at first sight not unlike light washing baskets, such as the washing comes in at home, but more of a square shape than that of an oval one. These we learned were hats used by mourners, whose faces must not be seen, whether men or women ; mourning for a parent lasts as long as two years ; the discomfort of wearing so

ungainly a hat under which only the ground can be seen, must be great. In other shops were the socks or cotton padded boots of the Corean, which are protected when worn only by plaited straw sandals.

We thus spent the greater part of the morning amusing ourselves. Soon after noon we sailed again. Our only other foreign passengers were a Russian doctor and an Irish girl returning to Seoul from Japan where they had been on their honeymoon. After leaving Fusan we were much indebted to them for bread and butter; our steamer had run out of bread and butter and had only rice and fish left, with which and with some tinned food (of which we had brought a store on board) we were able to supply our party.

Shortly after leaving Fusan we ran into bad weather and my little daughter was very sick; her ideas about it were expressed in the words, "Father, ship no good." As the gale increased we had to run for the lee of an island where we anchored until it was over. Our little steamer, unlike most of the Osoka Nippon Yusha Company's boats, was exceptionally dirty and the accommodation was very poor, and our voyage, which was continued up behind the many islands lying along the west coast of Corea, was one of endurance.

At last Chemulpo was reached. On the way up we passed a steamer going down the coast which was wrecked just afterwards; some well-known foreigners, missionaries from Seoul, were lost in her. Chemulpo, then so little known to the world, rose later on into fame when at the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war the news was flashed all over the world that the first naval engagement between these two countries had been fought off here, and we heard of the blowing up of a Russian cruiser and of the loss of her Consort, the *Variag*, a Russian gunboat. Many will remember what a thrill it created throughout Europe and the States. How little did we dream as we landed at this port that Chemulpo was thus to rise to notoriety, and much less did we think that our own little daughter would lie buried here in the following year; and there to-day that little grave lies far off in this foreign land surrounded by the graves of many of those Russian hero-sailors who fought so heroically in those two small ships against the whole Japanese fleet.

Chemulpo as we came into harbour was a busy little port, for a big export of rice to Japan was then going through it, the second outlet through which this grain flows, the other outlet being that of the Port of Fusan. Corea produces some of the finest rice in the world; it is exported to Japan and exchanged for Japan's inferior

rice, which is, nevertheless, of fair quality. This Korean rice fetches a high price in that country, and the Koreans are thus able to make a good profit by its barter.

We landed alongside the wharf in the ship's boat, when in jumped a crowd of Korean coolies and nearly capsized us. Eager to carry our baggage they fought each other like demons, and both the Amah and the baby were knocked down by them in their struggle, but fortunately were not hurt. The police quickly made their appearance and hammered the poor eager coolies (so anxious to earn a few "cash") without mercy, and they were soon cleared off, but not before a few had got away with some of our baggage. Crowds of coolies appeared on the quay as we climbed up its steps; they were stopping to gaze on this new invasion of foreigners, which was evidently of rare occurrence, for the work of the stevedores loading and unloading the boats alongside the quay came to a standstill.

At the Customs House we found the missing baggage and the coolie porters patiently waiting for their tips. Here we found a Frenchman in charge and he kindly sent up town for the proprietor of the Japanese hotel, with whom we later on proceeded to the hotel, escorted by a troop of coolies carrying our baggage (even two large Saratoga trunks), in their "Jiggies." A "Jiggie" is slung from the shoulders and rests on the flat of the back; it is a simple contrivance but very effective as by its use an easy method of carrying a heavy load is effected. It consists of a light framework made of wood, with two uprights on either side of it, across which are fastened a few light pieces of wood; it rests against the back; near the lower ends of the two uprights are two pegs let into them just about level with the small of the back, and upon them rests a narrow board; this forms a small shelf on which the loads are piled up. The Mexican Indians have a very similar contrivance, one that our own porters might very advantageously adopt.

As we entered the hotel the old Amah who was in front of us suddenly disappeared—she had fallen into the cellar, the trap-door of which in the floor of the little hall had been left open! Fortunately she fell on to some rice bags and suffered nothing worse than a fright.

Here we took up our quarters, and our Japanese proprietor did everything possible to make us comfortable. Our waiting-maids were Japanese boys, but the cook was a Chinaman, and, judging by our first meal, a chef; but he fell from grace as for ever after his cooking was bad.

In the afternoon I left my wife, Amah, and Ah Sak to unpack, and I and little daughter went for a walk in the town. At the market

we came across some well-formed and well-shaped pears looking simply delicious. I bought a basketful and hired a coolie to carry them back. Near the market, to my great surprise, we came on a toy shop ; I had no idea these people made toys, but there they were and my little girl espied them immediately. They turned out to be all made of papier maché ; one of them was a tiger with a head that wagged up and down which took her fancy, but as it was nearly as big as herself I thought it impossible to carry off and far too heavy, for it looked like a great wooden toy tiger, with its brown and yellow stripes most artistically painted on it. Greater still was my surprise to see the child put her arms under it and lift it quite easily. Then it was that I discovered that the toy animals in the shop were made of papier maché. So we bought the beast, and she insisted on carrying it though she could only just walk herself. We soon had a crowd of Coreans round us ; they wanted to carry it for her, but no ! she stuck to it, and every now and again put it down to see its head wag, and then struggled on. By the time we reached the hotel we had gathered a big mob, but they kept an open ring round us. That wonderful tiger (for it was really a marvellous imitation of one) was for many a day a great source of delight to the child and almost as much so to her Amah and Ah Sak who had never seen the like.

The pears had arrived and we sat down to enjoy them, but, alas ! they turned out to be absolutely tasteless and of the consistency of a watery turnip, but we found that by stewing them all their flavour was brought out.

Chemulpo, when the tide is up, is quite a pretty port with its surrounding hills and cliffs running along the beach a little beyond the town. The tide here rises to a great height, as much as thirty feet, but when out it leaves a long stretch of mud. The foreign community was a strange mixture of all nationalities. In the Customs were three foreigners, a Frenchman, an Englishman, and an Italian. At the Consulate lived our Consul and his very charming wife. The rest of the community was comprised of merchants—English, German, American, French and Italian. A little outside the town lived two American missionaries.

One of the notables in the town was an American, a very much respected man and well-known by all who have visited Corea. He had married a Japanese lady and had a grown-up family by her. Another Englishman had married a half-English and half-Japanese lady. There was one man, a Japanese subject, who had been born in America, educated and brought up in Germany, becoming a naturalized German, who later in life became a naturalized



American, and still later a naturalised Japanese. He had married a half-Dutch and half-Japanese lady. Then there was a Spanish lady who had married a Chinese gentleman whom she had met at the Chinese Legation in Madrid. He had settled here ; he was a great gardener and very well off ; but the curious part was that having no children they had adopted two, one a Japanese boy, the other a Russian girl : just think of it, four nationalities in one family. There were other children of mixed marriages, the funniest mixture of peoples imaginable.

There was quite a nice little Club House and tennis courts, and as we got to know them the whole community appeared to be on excellent terms one with another, and there was a friendliness not often met with among so diversified a set of people ; indeed we got quite fond of all of them during our stay. The German had married one of his own country-women and had built quite a residential palace on top of one of the hills near the town, which commanded a very fine view. Though German, they were very estimable people. The Consul and his wife proved to be most delightful people ; he was an accomplished violinist, while she had a very sweet voice ; and many a very happy evening we spent with them. My wife at our first dinner with them was greatly amused ; as we sat chatting some time after dinner a procession of servants entered with all sorts of saucepans, pails, etc., which they showed to their mistress. We both wondered what it could mean and when the explanation came we laughed heartily. Our hostess had hit on the plan of ensuring her pots, kettles and pans being kept clean, and every night after they had cleaned them up they all thus paraded with them for her inspection. She had tried visiting the kitchen herself to inspect things but had found this plan a far more successful one : but to see the drawing-room suddenly invaded by a string of servants carrying all the kitchen utensils was very funny !

## CHAPTER XXVI

### COREA—HER EARLY HISTORY

BEFORE entering further on our experiences I propose to give a short account of this hermit-nation's early history, or origin; it is quite unknown to the average man and is exceptionally interesting; most of it I have based on W. E. Griffis whose *Corea, The Hermit Nation* is the best, if not the only reliable history in English of this wonderful country, and from it I embody a few extracts.

Corea (or Korea as sometimes spelt) is the European name for it, given to it by the early Portuguese navigators, but Cho-sen is its proper name, and means the land of the "Morning Calm"—a name most appropriate to it as applied to its scenery and country life, but not so when applied to its people who have passed through so many vicissitudes, and have been ground, as it were, between the upper and nether millstones of invasions from its northern neighbour, the Chinese Empire, and from its southern neighbour, the Japanese Empire.

Geographically it forms a peninsular not unlike that of Florida; on its east coast it has few harbours, while on the West Coast are innumerable islands (the largest Quelpart) and many harbours and many navigable rivers, the chief of which are the Yalu on its northern boundary, the Ta-Tong on which is built Pyeng-Yang, the old capital, and the Han, which flows past Seoul (pronounced sowl) the Capital.

The Coreans claim to date back to 1122 B.C., and though their early history is very uncertain and lost in a haze of mist there is probably an element of truth in this. The old kingdom of Cho-sen was entirely outside the present kingdom of Corea, but invasions from this ancient country led to the acquisition of the northern portions of Corea down to the Ta-Tong river. Going back still further Griffis states: "Somewhere north of that vast region watered by the Sungari river, itself only a tributary to the Amur, there exists a petty kingdom called Korai or To-Li. Out of this Kingdom sprang the Corean race. Slightly altering names we say in the phrase of Genesis 'Out of Korai went forth Ko and builded Korea.' Out of this kingdom adventurers with a few followers crossed the Sungari when they came to a tribe living

between that river and the 'Ever White Mountains' (now forming the northern boundary of Korea). This was the kingdom of Fuyu: certain is it that the Fuyu people were the first nation of Manchuria to emerge from barbarism and become politically well-organized." From them came the Koraian Kingdom, which burst into the ancient kingdom of Cho-sen, about which Griffis says, "By common consent of Chinese and native tradition Ki Tsze is the founder of Korean social order. Ki Tsze in 1122 B.C. leaving China was possibly the founder of ancient Cho-sen. The descendants of Ki Tsze are said to have ruled the country until the fourth century before the Christian era." "If this tradition be true the civilisation of the Hermit Nation nearly equals in point of time that of China, and is one of the very oldest in the world, being contemporaneous with Egypt and Chaldea." "It was feudal China, the China of the Gin Dynasty, from which the Tsze emigrated to the north east. Knowing no other form of government, he, if the founder, doubtless introduced feudal forms of government, and, whatever may be thought of the theory there suggested, it is certainly surprising to find a distinctly marked feudal system already passed the rudimentary stage, in the wilderness of Manchuria, a thousand miles away from the seats of Chinese culture, as early as the Christian era. As nearly the whole of Europe was at some time feudalised, so China, Corea, and Japan have each passed through this stage of political life." "The feudal system in China was abolished by Shi Whang Ti, the first universal Emperor, B.C. 221, but that of Japan only after an interval of 2,000 years, surviving until 1871. It lingers still in Corea, whose history it has greatly influenced." "Out of Fuyu came the Kingdom of Kokarai, and it was under the shadows of the 'Ever White Mountains,' which form the northern barriers of Corea of to-day, that this vigorous nation had its cradle and its home in youth."

"The people of this young state were rich in horses and cattle." They were fierce, impetuous, strong, and hardy. "Fond of music and pleasure at night. Especially characteristic was their love of decoration and display. At their public gatherings they decked themselves in dresses embroidered with gold and silver. Their houses were adorned in various ways. Their chief display was at funerals, where a prodigal outlay of precious metals, jewels, and embroideries was exhibited." "In the general forms of their social, religious, and political life the people of Fuyu and Kokarai were identical or nearly so, while both closely resemble the ancient Japanese of Yamato." The Chinese of the Confucius classic had attained to an unusual degree of literary culture. "By A.D. 169,

the Kokarai Kingdom embraced the whole of the old territory of old Cho-sen or of Liao Tung, with all the Korean Peninsula north of the Ta-Tong, and even to the Tumen river." They increased in numbers and spread over the Peninsula, overrunning it as far as the Han river, on which Seoul is now situated. They made their Capital at " Ping-an " (Pyeng-Yang) on the Ta-Tong, and resisted three great Chinese invasions consisting of both army and navy. In the second one they numbered over a million. The weapons, spoils, and prisoners taken by the Koraians were " Myriads of myriads of myriads."

These invasions left Korai in peace about the year 613 A.D. . B.C. 107, south of the Ta-Tong river the Peninsula was divided into three kingdoms, Mahan, Bannan, and Shin-Han, the latter on its eastern side. Kijun, the King of old Cho-sen, after its overthrow by the Koraians, escaped to Mahan with a number of his Chinese followers, said to have been a hundred families. The people he found here were a rude agricultural community dwelling in villages. Kijun soon became their King, and called them Hai Ksai, and thus arose the Kingdom of Hiaksai ; its history extended to the tenth century when it was extinguished in name and fact in United Corea. Japan had often proved its friend in helping it against Chinese invaders, and its hostile neighbours, the people of Shinra, Shin-Han. " This name Shin (China or Chinese) points to the origin of the clan it belonged to. As in the case of Hiaksai, the Shin tribe possessing power and intelligence extended their authority and boundaries, gradually becoming more powerful ; under their twenty-second hereditary chief, or ' King,' considering themselves paramount over all the clans, they changed the name of their country to Shinra."

Between the years twenty-nine and seventy they sent an envoy to Japan and with it presents for the Mikado of swords, mirrors, jade and other works of skill and art. " In this we have a hint as to the origin of Japanese decorative art. It is evident from these gifts, as well as from reports of Chinese historians concerning the refined manner, the hereditary aristocracy and the fortified strongholds of the Shinra people, that their grade of civilisation was much higher than that of their northern neighbours. It was certainly superior to that of the Japanese."

" Unlike the Mahan, the Shin-Han people lived in palisaded cities." " They cultivated mulberry trees, reared silk worms and wove silk in fine fabrics." " They understood the art of smelting and working iron and used this metal as money." " The curious custom so well known among American savages of flattening the

heads of newly born infants is noted among the Shina-Han people.”

The country suffered from great Chinese invasions and also from Japanese ones. In 528 A.D. Buddhism was formally established in Shinra. As early as the sixth century a steady stream of immigrants, traders, artists, scholars and teachers, and later Buddhist Missionaries, passed from Shinra into Japan interrupted only by the wars which from time to time broke out. “Kion-chiu the Captial of Shinra was a brilliant centre of art and science, of architecture and of literary and religious light. Imposing temples, grand monasteries, lofty pagodas, hall of scholars, magnificent gateways and towers adorned the city. In Campaniles, equipped with water clocks and with ponderous bells and gongs, which, when struck flooded the valleys and hill tops with a rich resonance, the sciences of astronomy and horoscopy were cultivated. As from a fountain, rich streams of knowledge flowed from the capital of Shinra, both over the peninsula and to the court of Japan. Even after the decay of Shinra’s power in the political unity of the whole peninsula the nation looked upon Kion-Chiu as a sacred city. Her noble temples, halls, and towers stood in honour and respect enshrining the treasures of India, Persia and China, until the ruthless Japanese torch laid them in ashes in 1596.”

In 943 A.D. Shinra fell, and united Corea arose on the ruins of the three kingdoms of Korai, Hiaksai and Shinra. Connected with the great attainments of the Shinra kingdom, Griffis gives an interesting account of the origin of the Corean alphabet, which was invented during the period of its greatest prosperity. He says, “In the civilisation of a nation the possession of a vernacular alphabet must be acknowledged to be one of the most potent factors for the spread of intelligence and culture. It is believed by many linguists that the Choctows and Coreans have the only two perfect alphabets in the world. It is agreed by natives of Cho-sen that their most profound scholar and ablest man of intellect was Chul-chong, a statesman at the Court of Kion-chin, the capital of Shinra. This famous pen man, a scholar in the classics and ancient languages of India as well as China, is credited with the invention of the Nido or Corean syllabary, one of the simplest and most perfect ‘alphabets’ in the world.” “The Nido is composed almost entirely of straight lines and circles, and the letters belonging to the same class of labials, dentals, etc., have a similarity of form easily recognised. The Coreans state that the Nido was invented in the early part of the Eighth century, and that it was based on the Sanskrit alphabet. It is worthy of note that if the date given be true, the Japanese Rata Rana, invented a century later, was perhaps suggested by Corean.

One remarkable effect of the use of phonetic writing in Corea and Japan has been to stereotype, and thus to preserve, the ancient sounds and pronunciation of words of the Chinese, which the latter have lost."

I have given a sketch of the origin only of Corea because so little is known about this Hermit-kingdom, shut out from intercourse with Europe until only about sixteen years before we first landed there. Interesting it is, too, in that it appears to have reached the zenith of its cultured state in one of its three kingdoms (namely, that of Shinra) before they finally became united Cho-sen. Gradually Corea has lost its art, and its fine ceramic industry, which it gave to Japan, is a thing of the past, while its artists are only represented now in the houses of the rich Japanese and in the museums of Japan, proving that it once possessed artists in power and conception equal to those of Japan itself. Corea of to-day has lost its past, its culture is decayed, and while its remnants remain amongst a few of its litterati the Coreans themselves know little of its past and most wonderful history. Its walled towns and cities, monasteries and temples alone remain visible witnesses and records in stone of its remarkable and interesting history, "remarkable" because of the many invasions of Monguls, Chinese, Japanese and other peoples.

The Coreans as seen to-day are a distinct race from the Chinese, and though they are nearer in their affinities to the Japanese yet they are totally distinct. To-day Corea, having been annexed by Japan, is no longer an independent nation. In sympathies the Coreans are with the Chinese antagonistic to the Japanese. The Coreans of to-day believe that China will, in years to come, become strong, when she will come to the rescue and free the country from Japanese domination. In 1884, the U.S. signed a treaty with Corea and our own country followed. A party of American missionaries and teachers soon afterwards entered Seoul, and the commencement of intercourse with European nations may be said to have begun from about this date. Even to-day there are comparatively few western foreigners in the country—there may be two or three hundred, I doubt if there are more, and of these by far the greater number are missionaries.

Griffis again writes of the country as follows:—"The land of Morning Calm is by all accounts of travellers a land of beauty, and the customs and literature of the people prove that the superb and inspiring scenery of their peninsula is fully appreciated by themselves. Not only are picnics and pleasure-gatherings within the groves common to the humbler classes, but the wealthy travel great distances simply to enjoy the beauty of marine or mountain

view. Scholars assemble at chosen seats, having fair landscapes before them, poets seek inspiration under waterfalls, and the bonzes, understanding the awe-compelling influence of the contemplation of nature's grandeur, plant their monasteries and build their temples on lofty mountain heights. These favourite haunts of the lovers of natural beauty are as well known to the Coreans as Niagara and Yosemite are to Americans, or Chamounix to all Europe. The places in which the glory of the Creator's works may best be beheld are the theme of ardent discussion and competing praise with the people of each province. The local guide books, itineraries, and gazetteers descant upon the merits of the scenery for which each of the eight divisions is renowned."

The above reference to their love of Nature's wonders is very characteristic of these people, and puts them, in my opinion, on a high pinnacle of civilization. Their civilization may be different from our own, and is unlike that of the Chinese, except for their obsession, or fear of evil influences, which well nigh weighs down both nations. In character they are between the Chinese and Japanese, having something even akin to our new national character,—at least my subsequent daily intercourse with them led me to think so. Of all the Eastern people whom I have met—it may be because I know them better—they alone, when on terms of close intimacy, made me often forget that I was talking to foreigners; there is something congenial—perhaps inexpressible—something in their character that, were it not for their physiognomy, dress, and environment, makes one feel there is a marked similarity between their nature and our own; so true has this proved that I have often been startled by it. Although they were apparently so different—in religion Buddhist, with a curious mixture of Nature Worship, ethically strongly Confucian, and in almost every way so different—yet I could never get away from this indefinable "something" about them, which was so un-eastern that we were able to exchange thoughts and ideas with them as if they were of our own race. I am sure that those who have known them intimately for years will bear me out in what I say in this connection, for it is most marked and unmistakable.

They are a strange race wedged in between China and Japan, and yet so dissimilar to both. Chinese influences have left their mark in the north, and Japanese influences in the south, but in the Central provinces or "Dos," as they are called, the race remains very pure, and little adulterated. Many customs of both Chinese and Japanese are imprinted upon the Coreans, the result of many Chinese and Japanese invasions, but they still remain an entirely different

race of people, both in physiognomy, and in their principal characteristics.

In features they are Mongolian with a distinctly Semitic aspect pervading many of them. In dress they are now entirely different from either of their neighbours and apart from all other nations. The dress is for the poorer classes distinctively white both for men and women, though in the former case it is usually surmounted by a black horsehair or bamboo hat, of which, as already said, there are many shapes and forms; the most common type is a single broad-brimmed low-crowned one; the more complicated one, the scholars' or student's hat, is all of horsehair with an inner kind of tight-fitting skull-cap with an outer cap encircling it, turned up perpendicularly and ending well above the crown of the head in five or six sharp points with a scalloped or crescent edge extending between each.

The Yangbans (gentlemen) and officials wear a dress made up of delicate-coloured gauze linings of silk over which is worn a white one of similar material.

The official language is Mandarin, and here Chinese influences have left their mark, for all the educated Koreans have to learn this language; yet for centuries this country maintained its isolated position and earned for itself the soubriquet of the "Hermit Kingdom."



## CHAPTER XXVII

### SEOUL AND THREATENED MURDER OF FOREIGNERS

IN our Treaty with Corea it was agreed that the British Government would name a schoolmaster who should educate a number of Corean boys in our language, the French Government doing likewise. Hutchinson, who was appointed, had formerly been in the Post Office for several years at Hong Kong. His training, however, had been that of a schoolmaster and the pupils he turned out proved him to have been a man of great ability. I met many of them; they not only spoke and wrote English well but had the spirit of an English Public School boy—keen on our games and (from my personal experience with several of them) upright and honourable. Taking into consideration the environment of these lads—many of them of the “Yangban” (gentlemen) class, whose home atmosphere was that of intrigue and pettiness—we may say that his power over them in not only teaching them our language but also imbuing them with right principles, was of an exceptional character.

Later on two of them especially, both Kims by name, proved themselves treasures. One of them not only knew English well, but equally well French and Chinese, and was an excellent typist. The other knew English and Chinese, and had a fair knowledge of Japanese. The former is still in the employ of a Corean Gold Mining Company, with which I have long been associated, and the other, whom I recommended to the U.S. Legation, is still the chief Corean in the U.S. Consul General's office after about fifteen years' service. Others I might name, but these two were good examples of Hutchinson's pupils. I still write them an occasional letter, having a deep regard for them.

What was more remarkable about Hutchinson was that he himself was almost an Easterner; his house was always full of spies who reported to him everything that went on in the palace; there was little that was not known to him, and in intrigue he was an adept. Still there was the astounding fact that his pupils turned out unlike their master, and more like Englishmen of high principles. Hutchinson was liked by all who knew him; he was genial and most hospitable and ready to impart to the stranger his intimate knowledge of Corean life, and of Court intrigue; indeed, he was too well up in all intricacies of Court etiquette. From him I obtained during

this visit one of his pupils to act as my interpreter, with instructions to trust me as the young man would himself. I had a good deal to do with Court officials during this time, and this young man's services proved invaluable; without his help I should have failed in my mission.

In Seoul some old friends of both my wife's and my own family lived. They were both missionaries, but belonged to no mission. They had lived some years in Japan, and both knew Japanese well, and had come to Corea to live; there, too, they had mastered the language. He was an Oxford man, and of a very literary turn of mind, and deeply interested in both Japan and Corea. Her old mother was the widow of an Indian judge; in the previous year she had made a trip all the way to Seoul to see her daughter, but it was too much for the old lady who died in Chemulpo, and is buried there—where, too, my own little daughter lies buried by her side.

In Seoul I met Angus Hamilton at the Legation, and many an interesting conversation did we have together with our then acting Minister who was himself a great Japanese scholar. Angus Hamilton was well-known in those days as a writer and correspondent to some of our leading papers. Later on he came to a sad and untimely end. A vein of melancholy always seemed to hang over him, and I remember his account of shutting himself up for a time in a Corean Monastery, where he spent a time of contemplation, and from his remarks I believe Buddhism had got its grip on him.

My wife went up to stay at Seoul with some friends, but business kept me mainly at Chemulpo, with frequent visits to Seoul.

My Corean interpreter one day approached me with grave and serious face and told me there was something on his mind he wanted to tell me, but he feared that if he did so I might tell other foreigners, and that if it became known that he had told me he would probably lose his head. Perceiving that he thought very gravely of the matter I told him I would not repeat it, unless, as he hinted, it was of so serious a nature that I ought to tell our Minister, and if so it would be to him only. On this he told me the rumour was about the place that all foreigners were to be killed on the 6th of the following month (November), that he had seen a placard to this effect, and on it was the Emperor's Seal. I asked him if he believed it, to which he replied "even if the placard he had seen was not issued by the Court, but the people should believe it to be so, the result would be the same." Later on in the day he came in to tell me it was getting about and the talk of the people. Even then I did not think it was sufficiently serious to necessitate a visit to

Seoul to see our Acting Minister, but I wrote to him instead, telling him that I gave the lad's story for what it was worth.

To my surprise, I received an answer back that such an order had gone forth, and placards announcing it had been posted up in many places, and that all the Foreign Ministers had gone in a body to the Emperor, and had announced to him that if any of the foreigners were killed, both the English and French fleets would land a force, seize Seoul, and depose him ; he asked me at the same time not to speak about it to the foreigners as so far as his information went, those who had heard of it looked upon it as an idle rumour. He believed that the danger was warded off and that there was nothing to be feared unless to some of the missionaries in out-of-the-way places. Messengers, too, had been sent out to every part of Corea where there was any European or American living to annul the order.

He told me subsequently that the Emperor declared that it was that notorious minister of his, Yi Yong Ik, who had sent forth the proclamation, but sealed with the Emperor's old Seal, which had then been recently changed for a new one ; this was equivalent to a forgery ! Yi Yong Ik, then the most powerful Minister, was disgraced and turned out of office, but in a few days he was back again. He was always a thorn to both the English and Japanese because he intrigued with the Russians against them. The Japanese did not forget it for when in 1904 they entered Seoul he was deported to Japan, and never came back again.

Two days before the date on which the foreigners were to be killed I received an invitation from Yi Yong Ik himself to dine with him and meet some of the other Corean Ministers. This was quite an honour and I accepted for that evening. The Coreans have a habit of overheating their rooms, and in sending my letter of acceptance by my Corean interpreter I asked the latter if he could manage by way of a passing remark to tell Yi Yong Ik that foreigners did not like too hot a room, and that he was afraid their hot rooms would spoil my dinner. Now official dinners are not given at a respectable hour but at midnight. Here I was about to dine with the Minister who had planned the extermination of the foreigners, and I must own I felt a little suspicious as to whether this was not some special trap for myself.

It was a bitter cold night : the Han river was already frozen over and snow lay deep on the ground. Dressed in evening clothes, with a fur coat over them, I proceeded to Yi Yong Ik's residence a little before the midnight hour. Arriving at the outside gates—great mediæval looking ones—they were swung open and the guard

let us pass, when I heard them clang to and the bolts and bars replaced. A few paces further on we came to another big gateway, and the same thing happened again. As they closed behind me I felt cut off from the outer world and wondered if it was to be a dinner or some terrible torture that I was to enjoy. Coming to a Corean house we were shown in and met by my host ; then leaving my coat and wrap there I was led into the dining hall, where were assembled the guests to whom Yi Yong Ik introduced me, but I do not now remember their names ; one in particular was the Master of the Mint ; but I had no sooner gone through this ceremony—which was quite a function in itself as so many compliments had to be made and returned—than it dawned on me that it was most terribly cold and that no fires had been lit. The guests, I noticed, were all attired in loose silk robes well-lined with padded-cotton, as warm as any fur ones.

We then all sat down to a long table, foreign fashion, with chairs provided, while in the centre of the table stood a huge bowl round which we gathered each with a spoon and small bowl in his hand. I was dying to get something warm, for I was shaking with the cold and gratefully did I look on that soup ; but fortunately for me Yi Yong Ik started to help himself first, not by filling the bowl in his hand as I should have done had I started, but by dipping his spoon direct into the soup and carrying its contents to his mouth, holding the basin below only to catch any drippings from the spoon. All followed suit ; a horrible custom, but I was only too glad to get some warm soup at any cost ! Floating in it were great lumps of neatly-cut pieces of fat ; these were much sought for, or rather fished after (as I should describe their feats of catching them) and these tit-bits they pressed upon me ; accepting them I contrived to let them fall into the basin.

After the soup came a number of courses of fish, followed by those of “ Kimchee,” a dish of which the Coreans are passionately fond and there are many varieties of it. The more common ones are made out of simple cabbage and turnips and form a staple article of diet. Just imagine my horror when Yi Yong Ik (I think it was) announced that there were to be five different kinds of “ Kimchee ” and that, being made especially in my honour, they hoped I would tell them-which of the five I liked best. This was then to be my torture, for I hated its very smell ! Now what is “ Kimchee ” ? you will be wondering. “ Kimchee ” is nothing more nor less than a vegetable or mixture of vegetables allowed to rot and ferment. It is most carefully prepared in great stone jars, put down in them in layers and pressed down with heavy stones and sodden in salt water.

Cabbage and turnips treated in this way are prepared in every village. I had for courtesy's sake kept a strict control over my facial muscles. I could honestly tell them which I liked least ; the ordeal was gone through, though my Little Mary nearly gave me away for it almost refused to retain them.

Then followed a course of most delicious sweetmeats of many varieties, some of which were worthy of the gods, but perhaps my appreciation of them may have been due to the contrast. After we had all eaten, wine flowed ; I noted that no spirits were drunk ; the Coreans are great spirit drinkers, but the wine here, whether native or foreign, was the most abominable stuff I ever tasted, and was nearly as bad as the " Kimchee " had been. But I drank it if only to get warm.

Not much conversation passed during dinner. Yi Yong Ik sat like a sphinx with his immobile features and only occasionally addressed a remark to me. What little conversation there was related principally to the several dishes we had partaken of ; then it turned on foreign ways and customs. Yi Yong Ik asked me what my impressions of Seoul were. I told him that they were delightful to me and that it was a most enchanting city, but I added that I had a question to ask him in connection with it. I explained that we foreigners were contemplating a picnic on the following day (it then being well into the early hours of the morning) and that our intention was to hold a picnic at our favourite resort outside the walls of Seoul, but that we were in some doubt about it being possible to do so, as we had heard it was the day upon which we were all to be executed. Now was the execution to be in the morning or late in the day ? If the latter we could still have our picnic and come back after our pleasant day's outing for our dismissal from this world to a better one. " Now," said I, " if you would do me the favour of telling me whether we could have our picnic, we would all think it most kind of you." I watched his face closely ; not a muscle moved on it ; after a pause he said " there are some Boxer men about who started this story." I laughed heartily, and treated it as a joke, and most of the guests joined in, but Yi Yong Ik remained immovable.

This fiend had risen to power from being originally an ordinary coolie, when he was employed as a despatch carrier between the Court at Seoul and Wonsan on the East Coast. These journeys he used to make across the mountains in an incredibly short time, and so he came to notoriety, and was employed in the Emperor's household Department ; then coming under the personal notice of the Emperor he was raised to a place of honour, until by intrigue

and his extraordinary hold over the Emperor he became eventually the most powerful State Minister, and was in this position at this time. The number of victims whom he had removed (most of whom had lost their heads) was appalling. Through his success in thus removing his rivals he had gained his present position. At one time his rivals succeeded in getting him condemned to death on account of some disparaging remark he had made in public against the Emperor's favourite concubine, but the Emperor saved him by a stratagem by asking for a delay as Yi Yong Ik had not rendered his accounts. This delay saved him, for in the interval he, by intrigue, outwitted his enemies and remained in favour with the Emperor.

The Master of the Mint was an important statesman, and was at this time keenly intent on introducing a Korean silver currency. Only a few fifty cent. coins, equivalent to the half Japanese Yen, were struck off as specimens. Two of these were presented to me which I still have and keep as curios, for they represent the sole and very limited silver coinage struck in Korea whilst it remained an independent nation.

In the small hours of the morning we broke up, and I was indeed glad when, half-frozen, I got once more into my winter coat. Leaving the scene of my night's exploits I found myself safely outside in the streets of Seoul. My friends' house, where my wife was staying, was across the city, and as I did not like to disturb them at so late an hour my interpreter suggested we should turn into a small Japanese inn near by. Waking the Proprietor up we were shown into what looked like a panelled room, without a stick of furniture in it; but the housemaid appearing slid some of the panels aside and brought forth from the recesses behind them a number of thickly padded cotton quilts. With a few of these a mattress was made up on the floor, and with an equal number thrown over me I laid myself down.

Rising late the same little maid appeared again and quickly stowed away all traces of our bedding, while at the same time she brought in a box on which was placed a big bowl of hot water and soap, and did not forget to bring a tooth comb which looked as if it had served the hotel's guests for years. After finishing our ablutions she brought in some little tables raised a few inches above the floor, and on them placed our breakfast, which to my surprise was really an English one—a grilled steak, bread and butter, and coffee. On asking them how they came to know English tastes I learnt that some of our missionaries were in the habit of staying here when passing through Seoul.

Later on I joined my wife at our friend's house. I had said nothing to her about the rumours of our execution on the morrow, but in the course of the day it turned out that our friends knew all about them, and had told her. The house we were staying in was a prettily-built little Corean one of the better sort, but had been partly Europeanized by knocking the central rooms into one large sitting-room or hall (with a small study provided at one end of it), while on either wing of the house was a nice bedroom, with a bathroom attached, opening out into the garden.

The fateful day arrived ; our main fears were for any missionaries in outlying parts, we felt that the plot had been nipped in the bud for ourselves, but there was the possibility Yi Yong Ik might still encompass it. The day passed and we retired for the night ; I was standing at one end of the room, my wife at the dressing table at the other end, when suddenly the door leading into the bathroom flew open. My wife exclaimed in a perfectly collected voice " T—, they have come." I sprang to the door and put my foot against it, while my wife handed me my revolver. There was, however, no pressure on the door from the outside ; after a time I flung it open and faced whoever might be there, but there was no one. In the bathroom the window was shut and the outer door locked. The whole thing seemed uncanny and unaccountable. At breakfast the next morning my wife was relating our experience when both our host and hostess exclaimed together, " how strange ! for exactly the same thing happened to us, our door flew open too." It was difficult to believe, but the facts are as given. The only solution to the problem may perhaps have been that one of those slight earthquakes to which Seoul is so often subject may have been the cause of the doors so suddenly flying open. We compared notes and found that both doors had been similarly affected, neither had opened just ajar, but wide open. Our own experience was strange enough, but for both doors to have acted in so unaccountable a way added greatly to the mystery. The day passed and we breathed more freely.

At this time the Boxer trouble had broken out in China, and its reflex was being felt in this country. Excepting the Indian troops and German troops in Shanghai we had seen little or nothing of it, save at Nagasaki, where we witnessed the landing of French and Japanese wounded. The French wounded were lying on stretchers in the hot sun waiting while arrangements were being made to receive them in the hospital. One amongst them was a French soldier who was writhing in agony, and my wife put her parasol over him to shade him from the sun, when a French orderly rudely

pushed her back. On the other hand the Japanese wounded were carried off immediately they were landed. We could hear little, too, of what was happening in Tientsin, only very ugly rumours, and during those few weeks it was an anxious time for all foreigners in Corea.

We returned from Seoul to Chemulpo and removed to the Chinese hotel, where we were more comfortable, and had our meals served in our own sitting-room. In the next room to us was a Russian who often played with our baby in the passage until he was taken ill. My wife and myself went up to Seoul to dine at the Legation ; on returning next day we found that the Consul and his wife had carried off our baby and her Amah to their own house, for the Russian had died meanwhile from malignant small-pox. Not a hint had the Chinese proprietor given us as to the nature of his illness, having said only that he was a little sick. It was an extremely kind act on the part of our friends thus to have sheltered her, and in doing so they were imperilling their own lives as the child had been in contact with the Russian. They were indeed real friends ! We removed at once back to the Japanese Hotel, and for some days were in considerable anxiety whether the child might not develop the disease, and pressed our good friends not to risk keeping her with them, but they insisted on doing so. How often since have we spoken together of their kindness and how much we appreciated it ! How much, perhaps, they never realized, but if this ever happens to meet their eyes I trust they will learn how deep our gratitude was.

I have not spoken about the railway to Seoul, with its great bridge across the Han River near that city, nor of the electric tramway and electric lighting of the city, but they need more than a passing notice, as does Henry Collbran, the man who built and ran them. He came as a pioneer to Corea, and soon afterwards constructed this line, the first in the country. He then built the electric tramways and followed with the lighting up of Seoul. These events were epoch-making in the advance of the country, and Chemulpo at once became a great exporting port. Later, this same man successfully carried on the opening up and working of the Suan gold mines which still continue to pay big dividends. In the north he has also opened a large copper mine which the Japanese have recently acquired from him. I consider that he more than anyone else led to the industrial opening up of Corea.

On the electric trams first commencing to run there were serious riots, the cars were overturned and burnt and the electric power-house partly wrecked. All this arose from some of the Coreans being run over by the trams and killed, entirely through their own



fault. On hot summer nights such as Seoul is noted for coolies would bring out their bamboo mats and lay them across the rails where, if anywhere, a cool current of air crept along the raised roadway; then they calmly stretched themselves out and went to sleep; it being dark and the conductor not seeing them, the tram ran over them, and in two cases actually beheaded them, for they had made a pillow out of the rails. Several cases of this kind happened and were the cause of the riots. The electric light is chiefly used in the houses of the better class, there being few electric lamps in the streets.

McLevy-Brown, now Sir John, who was the head of the Imperial Korean Customs, did much for Seoul and the country; through his influence wide and well-built roads or boulevards were cut right through the city, and as Eastern cities go Seoul is a clean one; and in many other ways his influences were greatly felt. The open-air drainage system still prevailed, and in a sunny climate perhaps, after all, it is the most sanitary system of drainage, but it is offensive both to the eye and to the olfactory senses.

Seoul—with its great walls encircling the city and running for many miles round it, following the ridges of the surrounding mountains, and going down into the valleys, crossing streams on stone built bridges, and up the sides of the steep mountain, again to follow along their crests—is a city of great interest, and alone in its beauty when viewed from some commanding point outside its walls from a distance. It has a dense population variously estimated at 200,000 to 300,000. The U-pong San and San-Pak-San are prominent peaks; their bare, rugged slopes and steep sides form a strong contrast to the views seen from outside the city of the country around; here the verdure and rustic aspect along the banks of the Han River, in the midst of which are many small islands, form charming pictures of country life, very different from the bare yet grand scenery, as seen from within the city, formed by its barren encircling mountains.

The most prominent building within it is the Roman Catholic cathedral of Gothic design (though of severe lines) which stands on the highest eminence dominating the city and not far from the Japanese quarters of the town. Our Legation, built in grounds of its own, stands a little way behind the back of the Palace and reminds one of home, with its old comfortable country-house style of architecture. The French and Russian Legations also form two of the best buildings. But most of the houses have the usual tiled roof for the better class and the thatched roof for the poorer class, both Korean in type.

The Korean house is usually of the low cottage-like style, with huge, roughly-hewn beams inside crossing the rooms and supporting the roof ; but the chief peculiarity of these houses is the method by which they are warmed, known as the " Kang," a simple flue system. Throughout the length of the building at its base are one or two crudely constructed flues, built of low, rubble walls, and across the tops are laid flat stone slabs ; the intervening space between the walls is then filled in with earth. Over this is laid a floor of clay often mixed with cow dung. At one end of the flues, but outside the house, is a fireplace, at the other end a short chimney is built. As fire-wood is costly the oak-scrub that grows on the hills is collected in the autumn months, brought in, and stacked ready to be burnt in the Kangs. At night only once has one of the household to get up and replenish the fuel. All doors and windows are kept closely shut, and the heat thus given out is not only surprisingly great, but almost unbearable to the European. The floors are so hot that the European cannot put his bare feet on them, though the Korean by long custom does so without appearing to feel any inconvenience. It is a cheap and very effective system of warming a house in the depths of their severe winters ; one often found the occupants almost nude, so well-warmed (or what I should call overheated) are they.

During my subsequent residence in the country, even in the rainy season about July, when travelling I never needed to carry a dry change of clothes, for all one had to do was to carry a towel to wrap round one's loins after taking off one's wet clothes, to get the Kang lighted, and to spread the clothes on the floor when in a very short time they would be dry.

One of the sights of Corea is the oak-scrub harvest, when a whole village will turn out, and up the mountain sides the men and women are to be seen cutting the scrub and loading it on the backs of their bulls (used as pack animals in this country) and so skilfully do they stack it up over and around them that all one sees is the animals' heads protruding from what look like moving haystacks.

The country between Chemulpo and Seoul is a farming one, and trips through it used to be delightful, as one frequently went up to Seoul in the morning returning late in the afternoon.

Towards the end of the year, about the middle of December, we started on our return journey to Shanghai via Chi-foo. As we left Corea we bid it good-bye, little thinking that we should in a short time be returning to reside there until the close of the two following years. Our visit had been one of the most enchanting of our many journeys ; we had thoroughly enjoyed Corea, or the

glimpses of it which we had had the good fortune to experience. Our new-found friends had done everything to make our visit pleasant, and we had fallen in love with the Koreans themselves. They were a plain-looking people and in features not at all taking, but what little we had seen of them proved that there was something lovable about them. The last morning we spent in Chemulpo was an intensely cold one, and taking a walk in the Japanese quarter of the town we came on a small crowd of men coming out of the bath-houses clothed only in their cotton Kimonos, with bare, sandalled feet, calmly walking back to their houses, apparently impervious to the cold which was several degrees below zero.

In a little Japanese steamer we crossed to Chi-foo ; it was a rough and uncomfortable trip taking nearly forty-eight hours to make. At 5 a.m. we landed, and on the wharf there was not a Chinaman about ; it was snowing and terribly cold. I had to leave my wife, Amah, baby, and Chinese boy to guard our baggage, while I set out for the town to get some coolies, and it must have been quite half-an-hour before I returned with them. As I walked up to the town, wondering what sort of hotel the one recommended by the Japanese Captain of our steamer would be, I luckily met some U.S. Army Officers, and they good-naturedly steered me to the one they were staying at. Here we spent a very interesting day for from them we got very graphic accounts of all that was happening at Tientsin and Peking, and, as they say in the States, " we had a real good time together."

We had little time to explore Chi-foo, a typical Chinese town, for finding that a steamer was leaving for Shanghai the following afternoon we sailed in her. Arriving there just in time for Christmas we had made all arrangements to spend three days with our host in a house-boat when I received a cable from Hong Kong to proceed there without delay.

One of the China-Indo boats was leaving that evening, and J. M. & Company gave instructions to the Captain to treat us right royally. We, with a Major W. returning to India, were the only passengers. Our cabins were the largest and most comfortable in which I had ever travelled. Our table was a most sumptuous one ; the weather too was calm and clear, though cold ; and instead of the usual voyage we had what was really a delightful yachting one. Our Captain was a host in himself and our fellow-companion the same ; our Christmas was well kept, and J.M. & Company had not forgotten the baby for she had her little Christmas gifts and tree provided for her. At Swatow, where we called, my wife met a missionary lady who had a large Chinese girls' school. The girls had been

taught drawn-thread-work and they did it most exquisitely—and the proceeds therefrom largely helped to support the school. Needless to say my wife came off laden with quantities of their work much of which she sent to friends at home, while some of it still remains in daily use in my house. Arriving at Hong Kong I left her there, and the day afterwards I went south to Pahang to examine the Raub mine as already described.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### REVISIT COREA.

ARRIVING once more back at Hong Kong, I left with my wife and little daughter (now growing from babyhood into girlhood) with her Amah and Ah Sak, for Corea.

We spent three or four days at Shanghai, and it was on this visit that my wife astonished a drawing-room full of ladies by telling them how interesting she found the old Chinese city—not one of them had ever been in it, or if they had they did not own up to it! Many, too, had lived years in Shanghai, but it was not fashionable to visit such smelly places, ; yet notwithstanding the abomination of unsavoury smells and filth it is well worth going through and is full of interest if sought for. There, as in Canton, is the original bridge as depicted on the willow-pattern china ; at least both cities claim their own bridge as the original ; both cannot be, but both resemble what is seen on the old dishes.

Thence we went on to Nagasaki and spent a few days there while waiting for a steamer to Fusan. It was Spring and the cherry blossoms were in full bloom, so on one of these days we took the train to Omara (about one and three quarter hours journey) to visit its noted cherry-tree avenue. Arriving at the station we found a crowd of Japanese all with their little baskets of refreshments, and all going for a picnic to the same place.

Here we got into rickshaws, and, after half-an-hour's run in them, we arrived to find the trees all in full blossom, and an exquisite picture they were! This avenue lies just outside a moat which surrounds an old Japanese castle. Our Japanese friends broke up into little parties and took up points of vantage where they could gaze on this most perfect picture. We left them in order to explore the castle, and afterwards we took a walk into the country round, and picniced, for we too had brought our little basket of refreshments. Our cousin's old valet, whom we had again picked up in Nagasaki, gave us all the history of the castle, and with him to act as interpreter for us we entered into conversation with the country-people whom we met in our walk.

Returning rather late in the afternoon, there sat those same little groups still gazing with wondering eyes on the cherry-blossom, and looking as if not one of them had moved away during the hours

we had been absent ! There we pictured them repeopling the trees with the fairies who are supposed to haunt the trees ; and in some of their tales the spirits of the trees have entered the human form and lived as beautiful women or as noted men. For an hour or so we sat and watched them, and I think we were even more interested in them than in the lovely picture, though the latter was a thing never to be forgotten. Unlike the English crowd they did not chatter but all seemed lost in contemplation. As the time to return approached they began to rise and move about and proved that life still animated them, for as they sat so calm and still they themselves might have been statuettes.

The rickshaws were soon filled and we all started back for the station. For once they might have been mistaken for a crowd of English excursionists as they laughed and called out to each other. It had been a lovely, sunny day, and they all returned to Nagasaki with every sign of their having spent, as we had, a most enjoyable day.

Whilst at Nagasaki a favourite climb of ours used to be to the top of the hill behind the Roman Catholic Church, from which there is a magnificent view of the sea and the country around.

Bidding good-bye to our friends the H's., with whom we had stayed, we went on board our steamer that was to take us back to Corea. When we got on board we found her to be the one in which we had crossed from Chemulpo to Chi-foo, the S.S. *Genhai*, of the Nippon Yusen Kaisha line. On this voyage we did not call in at Moji, but ran straight for Fusan, arriving there next day, and two days afterwards we once more found ourselves in Chemulpo.

Here we found H.M.S. *Bahfleur*, and later we met Admiral Sir James Bruce and Captain Warrender. With the latter we went for a picnic in their steam launch to one of the islands off here, where we found lilies-of-the-valley growing wild and in great profusion. Later on H.M.S. *Isis* (Capt. Windham), and H.M.S. *Astral*, (Capt. Brownlow) came in. Capt. Windham often came in to look us up, and was full of his interesting experiences in life, especially of people whom he had met.

The more immediate object of my visit was to examine into the titles of a mine which my firm was taking over, the one referred to in my account of my last visit to Pahang, Malay States. This involved constant visits to Seoul, for I had to deal chiefly with the household-department of the Corean Emperor, and I saw a great deal of Yi Yong Ik, then such a thorn in the side of the European diplomatic representatives ; and skilfully he played them off one against the other. At our own Embassy, again, I met quite a

number of interesting men, and at dinner one night there were Admiral Sir James Bruce, Capts. Warrender and Windham, Angus Hamilton, and Clark Thornhill—all men of note—and our own host Mr. Gubbins—Acting Minister in place of Sir John Jordan, then Mr. Jordan who was at that time home on leave. Gubbins himself was not only a very distinguished Japanese scholar but an authority on things Japanese. We also met here Dr. Allen, the U.S. Minister, a very distinguished man, a great Corean scholar, and an authority on all Corean matters. He had a remarkable collection of old Corean porcelain ; so rare are any genuine pieces of it, that it must have been priceless.

Strange as it may seem, Corea, who gave to Japan her Ceramic Art, has lost all trace of it ; only a very common kind of pottery is produced now, and, although the country has been searched for any pieces of her former artistic workmanship, yet no traces of it remain beyond what are occasionally and accidentally dug up. Soon, too, her remarkable brass-work will have disappeared, for the Japanese are flooding the country with cheap china-ware, and exchanging it for her brass. Unfortunately, the Coreans are captivated with this ware and gladly exchange it for their far more valuable brass.

Mr. Hulbert was another celebrity ; he and Dr. Allen were well-known as being two of the first western pioneers in this country ; he is a remarkable man, and has the Coreans and all connected with them, so to speak, at his finger tips. George Hutchinson, the schoolmaster, I have before mentioned ; he died soon afterwards, but left his imprint on the nation through the boys whom he had educated and turned out so successfully. There were also several missionaries whose names were household-words amongst the Coreans, and their lives if written would form a romance in themselves.

In Pyeng-Yang (which town I shall speak of presently) at the time of my visit there was a small colony of American and Canadian missionaries whose converts were being persecuted by the Corean authorities, much as they might have been in mediæval times ; they were being racked and even boiled alive in oil ; until the Prussian military caste arose and outdid them we used to think that only the Easterner could invent such fiendish tortures ; but from the work of the missionaries, started mainly in this city and also in Seoul, Corea has in a most marked way largely accepted Christianity ; probably not less than twenty per cent. of the nation are now Christian. They have their own self-supported churches, their own pastors, colporteurs, and missionaries ; many

of the missionaries are now working amongst the Manchurians, and it is said with great success.

For ourselves, during our stay in Corea, save when passing through Seoul or Pyeng-Yang, we did not come in contact with them, but judging by their results I have the highest regard for the missionaries of Corea ; I regret I cannot apply this to missionaries generally, though I have known many most wonderful men and women amongst them—people brought up in refinement, well-off themselves, yet giving up all to live the life of their poor foreign converts. One I remember, a man well-off, who had taken the foreign language scholarship at Cambridge, and had been through the Russo-Turkish war and afterwards decided to devote himself to missionary work in China ; he qualified first in the medical line at St. Barts where he passed out first, and then, after years of work among the Chinese poor, in an up country city, finally died from an attack of typhoid.

He was by no means an exception ; there are many to be found leading similar lives, and to take some of the really bad missionaries and single them out as examples of the rest is not only unjust and un-English, but grossly misleading. I used to fight shy of missionaries, and I think they avoid those whom they regard as worldly men. Perhaps they get snubbed if they attempt to cultivate their society, but whether a man upholds the Christian faith or not, let him not (as so many do) go out of his way to ridicule the missionaries. Their ways may be different from ours, but amongst them are men of great culture, intimately acquainted with both the language and the customs of the people in whose midst they live.

I have dilated somewhat on this subject of missionaries as I am so often assailed by questions as to my opinion with regard to them. I do not enter into the question of the truths of Christianity, for I am endeavouring to look upon the missionaries from a judicial point of view, fairly and justly judging from the standpoint of abstract right and wrong. With their tenets I have not always been in sympathy ; now I am—that is, in so far as the broad principles of Christianity go ; and yet anyone who knows the lives of the average heathens (as we call them) must admit that Christianity brings them rest from all their terrible fears (met with at every nook and corner) of the evil influences working against them, under which they verily groan ; for under this sense of fear they live in abject thralldom.

But to return from this somewhat controversial subject to our daily life. My instructions were to pay over certain sums to the Corean Government when the various documents had been gone into



and agreed upon. But though the mine had been provisionally acquired, and a contract had been entered into conditional upon the titles being found to be in order, I was a little uneasy about the mine itself, and anxious to form my own opinion. Whilst waiting for the answer from Shanghai to my report upon their titles I determined to pay a hasty visit to the mine.

From Chemulpo, where I left my wife and child, I sailed by a little Japanese boat for the port of Chinnampo further up the coast, at the mouth of the Ta-Tong river. The following day we anchored, for we had run into a thick fog, and there we rocked to and fro,—myself suffering from *mal-de-mer* in a berth too short for me and abreast of the door leading on to a narrow, dirty gangway. To dress one had to stand outside on the coal-strewn deck. On the third day we arrived at our port where I found that the owners of the mine possessed a nice, clean little Japanese house.

Just after midnight I resumed my journey in a small steamer plying up the river to Pyeng-Yang. The run up after the disagreeable sea journey was a pleasant change. It was in this river that later on the Japanese in the Russo-Japanese war so skilfully hid away their transports before sending their troops in them to Port Arthur. A little before noon, after sticking on a mud-bank, we arrived off Pyeng-Yang; at the water-gate off which we landed a typical Corean picture was made by the water-carriers; they supply the needs of this large city with the indispensable liquid, for no wells are allowed to be sunk, the tradition being that the city is a boat and that any well would sink it or in other words bring misfortune to it. A missionary, later on, and a little before the Russo-Japanese War, went against the native prejudice and sank a well, and of course misfortune came to the city when the Japanese not only took the city over but, worse still, tore down one of its gates and part of its ancient walls to make a broad entrance into it.

What vicissitudes has not Pyeng-Yang—one of the oldest cities, if not the oldest in Corea—passed through! It is “no mean city,” with its teeming population, and its densely-crowded houses encircled by picturesque walls, past which flows that broad, peaceful-looking river the Ta-Tong. It was here, too, that the Japanese in the Chino-Japanese War fought their first land-battle with the Chinese; they took the city with great slaughter of the Chinese troops who fled helter skelter and were mown down by the pursuing Japanese until, tired out with killing, they left the remnants to escape. Later on, the first land-shots in the Russo-Japanese war were also fired here; the Russian cavalry outposts reached the city walls, but they were quickly driven back.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### FIRST JOURNEY TO UNSAN MINES

As time was important I set out after a hasty snack of food for the mines, our cavalcade consisting of five horses, myself, interpreter, Chinese boy, and two mapoos (grooms). About ten miles out we passed through a well-cultivated valley which looked more like a garden ; before it had been a dry arid one, but an enterprising Corean had bored a tunnel through a hill and so let in the water from a neighbouring valley to irrigate it. I was told the work had taken many years to complete, and it was the only enterprise of its sort which I came across during my travels in Corea.

Twenty miles out we stopped in the market-village of San-Tang, where a cattle-fair is held six times a month. Our inn was my first experience of a Corean one ; the yard was deep in mud and around it were built the houses, and the accompanying servants' quarters. The proprietor was most obliging, but, however willing he may have been to make me comfortable, that was an impossibility, for the dirt of ages carpeted the floors and curtained its walls. At 4.30 a.m. we left again on our way to the mines, twenty-eight miles distant. En route we passed through a well-cultivated country with its paddy, wheat, buckwheat, and barley fields growing luxuriantly.

Ten miles out from San-Tang we crossed the Oogin river by a ferry-boat, which was pulled across by a rude kind of windlass working on a rope stretched across the river. A little further on we stopped to give our horses a feed. Now, as all Corean horses are fed on a kind of hot mash, the time taken up to prepare this food is out of all proportion to what is needed to complete the operation ; instead of an hour we were delayed about three hours, but this is typically Corean.

As we rode on again we passed native cattle being driven along the roads to San-Tang market, and Corea can boast of a very fine breed of cattle. The bulls are superb creatures and are largely used as pack animals. The lower-classes ride them, but it is "infra-dig" for any who consider themselves above that grade in life to be seen on one.

The whole ride from Pyeng-Yang to the mine was deeply impressive, for it brought back to one the past history of the

Chinese hordes that had passed through this part of the country, devastating it as they went ; now everything looked so peaceful, with a feeling in the air that it must have always been the "land of the Morning Calm" as its rightful name "Cho-sen" implies. The bewitching white dresses and black hats of the inhabitants, the curious little ponies packed with loads more fitting for elephants, the still more curious bulls (often looking like moving hay-stacks, as they plodded along entirely enveloped in a load of hay, straw, or brushwood), all were so silent, for the people and even the bulls are shod with straw shoes. Occasionally we passed a solitary tree (all this part of Corea is almost barren of trees) around which were thrown up great heaps of stones, and on asking my interpreter what it meant, he told me they were 'devil-trees' and that a passer by ought to add a stone to the heap as a present or the devil might do him harm. I am told that on the hill tops of Cumberland the old country people still heap up stones in much the same manner, and one wonders if it is some ancient religious rite that has survived to the present.

As we approached the mine we came on some Coreans, alluvial workers, washing out gold from the bed of an old stream. Their method of carrying the gravel to the washing sluice-box was novel ; pack-bulls were employed ; on either side of their backs were slung finely netted bags, kept open at the top by wooden hoops, while at their bottom ends they were gathered up and tied by a piece of cord, thus forming a kind of inverted pyramidal sack. As each bull arrived over the head of the sluice-box a pull at the cord untied the sacks and out dropped their contents. The gravel was then washed in a stream of water running through the box ; three men with pronged hoe-like forks kept raking the gravel up against the stream, and two other men gathered up the coarse stones in flat, broad-shaped, wicker work baskets, through which any fine material dropped back into the sluice box, while the stones were cast aside. After a time the water was turned off, and the fine material left at the top of the sluice box was gathered up, and washed out for its gold contents, in large, flat-bottomed bowls, unlike any other gold washing bowls or pans I have seen anywhere else in the world. By a dexterous jiggling kind of motion under the water, the gold was thrown to one side of the bowl and separated from the sand ; the latter was washed away and the gold which remained was carefully washed off into a small dish, dried off, and put into a piece of strong Corean paper for sale. Subsequently I found that these diggers—of whom we had perhaps two hundred or more in the near vicinity of the mine—made about a shilling per

head per day with an occasionally richer reward, which was the inducement that kept them day after day so patiently toiling on.

We crossed a small river about a mile from the mine, and through a small gap in a low range of hills we came in sight of a range of hills about 1,500 feet in height ; we made our way up a narrow ravine ; when about a third of the way up the hills we came to the head of the ravine, where the village of Unsan was situated, and immediately behind it was the entrance to the mines.

These mines had long been worked by the Coreans under Government auspices, and in hard rock they had penetrated on a steep incline some 700 feet into the hills. What was of special interest to the non-technical man was that without any powder or dynamite they had been enabled to run several hundreds of feet of galleries, whereas we, who came later, had to blast every foot in order to make progress. Their method had been to build wood-fires against the faces of the rock, and after letting them burn from three to four days, to quench them with water and so cool down the rock, which by this procedure cracked and fissured ; then, with their pointed, iron-shod sticks, they were enabled to prize out the rock. The effect of the fires was to dome the galleries far above the gold rock sought for (which lay at their base) so that their height was about twelve feet to fourteen feet instead of, as in ours, five feet to six feet ; the amount of waste stone that had to be sorted out and carried away in consequence was very great as compared with the thickness of the gold bearing-rock itself, which was seldom more than two feet thick.

Again, they proved expert metallurgists, for the auriferous rock carried the gold in pyrites (or a sulphur and iron mixture) and it could not be washed out in the ordinary way. They first ground this down to a very fine state of division by placing the small pieces of broken stone under a great boulder of hard granite or diorite. This was trimmed on its lower base into a convex shape and rested on a shallow, saucer-shaped stone. Pieces of wood were lashed horizontally across the larger rock, on either side, with the ends protruding. Holding these ends the Coreans rocked the stone to and fro and crushed the ore beneath it to a consistency as fine as the finest flour, until it had all passed through their fine horse-hair made sieves. The finely crushed ore was then washed in their gold washing-bowls, and all the pyritic material was jiggged out, and any little fine gold there might be in it separated out. These heavy sands were then spread each day on a bare rock and exposed to the sun and sprinkled with water, and each night were gathered up, and again exposed day by day until, after about seven to eight

months' exposure, the sulphur and iron having been oxidised, the sands were then taken and washed out for the rest of their gold contents which had thus been liberated. When one considers the patience, the toil involved, and the ingenuity displayed, one marvels firstly as to how the Koreans discovered the methods of treatment, and secondly that human nature should possess the patience shown by these people in waiting so long for their reward.

My time here was short for I had to hurry back and it was occupied almost entirely in technical matters. Suffice it to say I did not take a very rosy view of the mine. A very eminent Australian geologist and a Johannesburg expert had both pronounced upon the prospect of the mine. I confirmed their ore values but totally disagreed with their opinion as to the continuity of the deposit both longitudinally and in depth; my opinion ultimately proved to be but too true.

The mine itself was in a very circumscribed area, but the mineral concession comprised a large area of many square miles and included a number of Korean villages. I made a two days' ride over part of it before coming away, and these days were perhaps two of the pleasantest spent on my trip; the exhilarating air and the beauties of the scenery—so peculiar to Korea and coming as fresh revelations of new varieties of nature's wonders—combined to create a feeling in me of having been transported into some new world.

Amongst our discoveries on the trip were some coal-seams, but when subsequently some work was done on them they proved of so graphitic a character that for all practical purposes they were useless.

I saw too plainly that ultimately it would be necessary for me to take charge of the mine, for the lines on which it was being run were altogether on too extravagant a scale. The Manager's house (just completed) was a large and unnecessarily commodious one, although we reaped the benefit of it afterwards. Personally, I was disappointed as it meant giving up a large, and what I considered a better, mine in Southern China for which we had been negotiating; still I had the consolation that the climate was a very healthy one, and the surroundings full of interest, while the Koreans themselves were a delightful people—an opinion which all the foreigners I had met in Korea confirmed. The foreign community ultimately consisted of a small group of American miners, an Australian and Belgian, and the manager, who soon afterwards left for home.

There was then nothing to prevent me bringing up my wife and little daughter, and this was satisfactory. The mine itself was a

valuable one but the price paid for it was too high ; as events subsequently proved, we recovered sufficient profits from it to pay for its original cost, and for its development and plant, and for the erection of a mill and aerial ropeway from the mine to the mill ; and still there was a small balance on the credit side. Still, it was highly satisfactory that my own firm were not the losers of the large sums advanced by them.

After a very strenuous time, working day and night ; I set out for my journey back, but instead of going by road to Pyeng-Yang we went down the Ta-Tong river by boat. This river was, at its nearest point, about fourteen miles distant from the mine, to which a cart road had been made. Corean carts had to be brought up from another part of the country as their use was unknown in these parts. A native cart was a simple wooden contrivance (even to the wheels and axle) and was drawn by a native bull, put within a pair of shafts, which were but the prolongation of the sides of its bed. These carts were able to take loads up to a ton in weight, and have on special occasions taken twice this load. Later on we established along the road a wheelwright's shop, where repairs to the wheels—which were contsant—and an improved design of carts were made ; and still later we taught them to put iron tyres on to the wheels which was also a great improvement.

Over this road we transported all our stores and machinery. Supplies coming out from home were sent to Japan, thence to Chemulpo, again transhipped to Chinnampo, thence by river-steamer to Pyeng-Yang where they were off-loaded into native boats—frail looking craft which nevertheless carried five tons and were sailed, rowed, and poled up to our station here on the river. In the subsequent building of the mill and aerial ropeway not a case or piece of machinery was lost *en route*, or at all events there was nothing that had to be duplicated from home ; this affords an example of the way in which goods can now be handled and sent to almost any part of the world without loss if care is taken to organize a system of careful checking of the packages at each point *en route*.

From our little port of Kokul I set out for my boat trip down the Ta-Tong river, comfortably housed under a mat-hut erected amid-ships. We had only gone a few miles when my interpreter announced that a deputation of miners was waiting on the bank to interview me. These came with a petition asking whether, as they had most of them worked for many years in the mines and had now lost their livelihood, the new owners would make them some compensation. I asked them what wages or earnings they

reckoned they had been making per day; this they answered apparently honestly naming quite a low figure. I told them that I thought they should not be allowed to lose their employment, and I promised that on my return those that could prove that they had been interested in and had worked in the mine should be re-employed there, and at a wage (if they continued to work well) that would more than compensate them for their loss of time meanwhile. With this promise they were quite satisfied, and trusted my word which they would not have done had I been one of their own magistrates. Why I, a stranger, should have my word thus accepted is one of those enigmas of psychology with which one is so often met. On asking them why they had travelled so far and had not come to see me when at the mine, they said that, "as my mind was so full of other matters it was better to wait and find me on the river, when my mind perhaps would be better able to pay attention to their humble petition." On my return I saw they were given suitable occupation in the mine.

Between Kokul and Pyeng-Yang there are many lovely bits of scenery on the river, as it narrows up in places and glides between high bluffs on either side of it, and the various tints of brown and red are very beautiful. The trip down it was not accomplished without one of those common incidents on these rivers, for our frail boat was nearly wrecked in shooting a series of rapids, and we ourselves upset. After an unpleasant wetting she was got off, hauled up on shore, and the leaks she had sprung were quickly mended.

At Pyeng-Yang I had time to visit some of the missionaries and their establishments. Apart from the religious aspect of their labours their medical activities were a revelation to me; the number of out-patients attended to each day was very great, while of in-patients there were large numbers. Ophthalmia is a very prevalent disease in the country and the number of cases of cataract successfully operated on per annum was astonishing; and, judging by the opportunities afforded these doctor-missionaries, they ought to be the greatest eye-specialists in the world. Although the number of converts at this time was small the seeds then sown led in a few years to the great spread of Christianity throughout the country.

As I look back now on those few Westerners forming a little colony in this old city so far removed from western centres of thought, I am filled with admiration and surprise at the results they have accomplished. In every fold there are black sheep, or, if not black, shady ones; and one of them gave me considerable

trouble afterwards by sending one of his converts up to steal some of our stores at the mine ; but the less said about it the better ! His case is an example of how easy it is to generalize mistakenly from a single instance. But amongst them were highly-educated men and women, sincere and honest, and carrying on a work which in later years has borne much fruit. Their study of the language, their school-books, their translations of the Bible, their secular and religious works in the Corean language, their hospitals bringing healing to thousands, are in themselves a great work, and to Christians the results of their work as now seen in the many, many thousands of Corean Christians is extraordinary—and the more so, as the great bulk of the converts form a marked contrast in their daily lives to their heathen brethren.

From Pyeng-Yang I found a little Japanese steamer going straight to Chemulpo ; I took passage in her and arrived there again. On my arrival I found a reply from my firm to my cable sent from the mines through Pyeng-Yang awaiting me, telling me to complete the transfer of the mine by paying over the final moneys to the Imperial Government and to take formal possession on their behalf.



## CHAPTER XXX

### TAKE UP OUR RESIDENCE AT UNSAN

AFTER a few days, having settled up all these matters I, with my wife and little daughter, accompanied by our native servants, started for the mines in a Japanese steamer, and we arrived at Chinnampo on the second day. We spent a day here and then left for Pyeng-Yang in a large, open launch, crowded with passengers and with no awnings. On the way up the river a very heavy thunderstorm struck us, and we were soon drenched to the skin; some of the Japanese calmly stripped themselves naked, rolled up their clothes in little sheets of oil skin they carried with them, and when the storm had passed found themselves in dry clothes again. The Japanese poorer class seem to me to have less modesty than almost any other race I have been amongst; if they have any at all is a question.

From Pyeng-Yang we went up river by house-boat to Kokul, our river port, and my two loved ones revelled in the scene, both so thoroughly enjoying themselves that had we been on one of those lovely reaches of the Thames above Kingston we could not have enjoyed a trip more than we did.

At Kokul two chairs awaited my wife and Amah with the baby, and we all set out for our new home in the best of spirits, for every thing was so novel. Arriving at the mine my wife was agreeably surprised to find so roomy a house, and it was not long before she began to organize her household and to get everything into ship-shape order, so that within a week were we all comfortably settled in.

On going into the question of our stores I found that our foreign staff were living almost entirely on tinned vegetables and tinned mutton; fresh beef, however, was obtainable by the purchase of cattle. There was no need for tinned vegetables and we started a garden with three Chinese gardeners, and in a very short time we had an ample supply for ourselves and staff, and also (of the commoner vegetables such as cabbage and turnips) for many of the Coreans as well. It was simply surprising how luxuriantly they grew; tomato plants, for example, had to be supported or they fell down by reason of the weight of their own fruit. We gave a dinner party to our staff one night, and we were able to put as many as

thirteen different kinds of vegetables on the table, among which was some Chinese ones unknown in England.

In the whole of Corea there were no sheep, the common belief being that they would not live and that some poisonous plant they ate killed them. I determined to experiment upon the subject, so I sent up one of our Chinese coolies into Manchuria provided with about £40 in Japanese currency to buy a flock of 200 to 250; to the coolie this was a fortune. After about two months he returned with the sheep, and accounted for every cent of the money. These sheep were allowed to feed on the hills behind us during the summer and autumn months, but in the winter we housed them in an open shed, with a low wall round it to protect them from the wind, feeding them on hay and turnips. They turned out a splendid success and, without diminishing in numbers, supplied our camp with excellent mutton. The Emperor was supposed to be the only individual in the country who tasted mutton, and that only by sending a special despatch boat to Chi-foo for fresh mutton once a fortnight. The summer months grew to be very hot ones; the sun was quite as hotly felt as in the tropics but our sheep seemed to be unaffected by it.

Coreans are usually considered to be the laziest people in the world, but ours proved to be quite the contrary. On our concession we collected the taxes and paid them over to the local magistrate, so there was no "squeezing" by him of their gains, and the effect upon the people was marked. Not only did those who had for the most part formerly been agricultural labourers now willingly enter the mines, but they quickly became efficient "strikers" and "drill turners." We had three gangs, taught to run three diamond-drills, divided up into two shifts of ten hours each, and only supervised by one American diamond-driller, who set the diamonds on the crowns and started their holes; on the whole they made reliable and steady workers—an example of what can be done with them. Their poor little houses soon began to respond, old thatch was replaced by new material, the insides were relined, the outsides were nicely whitewashed; while the owners began to dress better, bought luxuries, and fed better. In the villages round there was a marked contrast to those off the Concession, for the inhabitants soon found that they could consider that what they produced was their own and became thrifty and hard-working.

We were the first foreigners seen in this part of Corea, and constantly we used to have large parties of visitors—mostly old women, for the younger ones were kept at home. These often had travelled long distances and had come on a "Kugean," or "sight see," as

they called it. My wife loved to take them over the house in small batches at a time, much in the same way as if she were showing them over a museum. Nothing escaped their interest; for example, every toilet article on the dressing table would be carefully examined and numberless questions asked as to its use. They would sit for hours around the house watching its inmates flitting in and out. Our little daughter, a bright, laughing, very fair-haired child, was an object of keen interest to them as they all invariably have black hair themselves. The old Amah would not allow them to touch her beyond, perhaps, shaking hands with her. "They too muchee no good" she would say, and all because they were of the poor class. Towards the end of the day, just before they disappeared to the village to find a night's lodging, my wife and daughter used to throw to them from the verandah handfuls of loaf sugar for which they scrambled like a number of children; then again, we used to get the empty bottles and tins saved up with which she used to load them before sending them away when they came in in the early morning to wish her good-bye, and these were very much prized.

As time went on these pilgrimages to the mine became less frequent as the villages had mostly, by these "Kugean" or picnic kind of trips, got to know us; but to the day we left we would often have a surprise, when perhaps a party of twenty or more would be seen making their way up the steep ascent through the ravine leading to our camp—such a crowd of wrinkled old cronies with their hard worn faces, but, beaming out of them, kindly eyes! All, too, got themselves up in their best clothes, spotlessly white, and we used to wonder how they arrived looking so clean after having covered a distance of forty, and often very many more, miles. In their own villages their white clothes do not lend themselves to anything approaching a clean appearance, unless seen at a distance, but on high days and holidays—of which they have many—they turn out in what may be described as garbs fit for angels.

We had representatives of the upper-class of women in the wives of our interpreters and of the native office staff. They live in seclusion and are not seen by the males other than their own blood relations. My wife used to visit them, and when they wished to return her calls we would arrange an afternoon when all the male servants and myself would absent ourselves from the house. The conversation which was somewhat limited (as my wife had only picked up a very small vocabulary) was mainly carried on through our old Amah who had very quickly picked up their language, and we often wondered what her translation of the pigeon English we spoke to her could be like.

There were two ladies, however, whose husbands of the Yang ban class sometimes accompanied them and acted as interpreters, but I was not allowed to be present. The conversation used to be about our respective families, the number of children our parents had had, and the number of their children, and in fact all about us. Our little daughter was fairly worshipped by them, and she and her Amah often paid visits to them. They were also much interested in our clothes and loved to turn them over in the drawers in which they were put away, and to examine them, asking all manner of questions, some very hard to answer.

The Koreans are not limited in the number of wives they may have, but it seldom exceeds one or two. Wife number one is the proper wife; the others are looked upon more as concubines. It is a custom for a bride not to speak to her husband for long after her marriage. I remember one of my interpreters telling me it was more than three months before he heard his wife's voice speaking to him. It would not be considered seemly for the wife to speak, and it takes a lot of coaxing on the bridegroom's part to break down the silence.

My wife was then the only resident white woman in camp though we had two lady visitors there for a short time soon after our arrival. Our store-keeper had married a half-Japanese and half-Dutch lady. He himself was quite a Japanese scholar, and had been compiling an Anglo-Japanese dictionary for the past fifteen years in his spare time.

Before the summer was over our numbers were added to by the arrival of several miners from California. I have always found that American miners are more adaptable to new and strange positions than our own countrymen, and there is less grousing if conditions don't come up to expectations; the American is easier to get on with, the Englishman stands up too much for his individual rights, and but too often unreasonably so. The former, again, taken all round, is better educated, and I must honestly say that, appreciative as one would wish to be towards one's own countrymen, they give much more trouble and are generally suspicious that one is trying to "do" them in some way or other; after a time—unfortunately that is often long—they get to know one and find out that their interests are fairly looked after; then there is no more trouble and all their better qualities seem to come out.

Amongst our American group we had some remarkable characters. One, who was a first class constructional-carpenter especially on anything approaching high-trestle work, loved not his trade, but was intensely keen on prospecting. He was known all over the

country as "God Damn" and this came about by his constant use of these words. He was, nevertheless, a good soul at heart, wrapped up in an only daughter—his wife was dead—and for her he lived. She was a school-teacher in California and ambitious to get on and he worked hard to help her to do so. All this and much more of his past history he confided to my wife. He was a typical Westerner, original in his ideas and full of humour.

He was working at one time on top of the mountain behind us, preparing timber sets for some small prospecting works up there. It was a tough climb, but twice a week I used to go up and inspect the work, my wife usually accompanying me, for she loved to pay a visit to old "Sam" as we used to call him. Usually I went on in advance of her and announced that my "missus" was just behind; this was to give him a chance to curtail his usually rather blasphemous language, which he always did in her presence save that an occasional "God Damn" would come out; then he would say, "oh! I beg your pardon, Ma'am," then immediately follow with another outburst, and again "Oh! I beg your pardon, Ma'am."

He was so used to his own rough language that he could not help it, and I used to laugh at the number of his expletives, and "Oh! I beg your pardon, Ma'ams" for do what he could they would slip out. His Corean helpers loved him, though he was very rough with them, but old Sam was very just and fair. He afforded a good example of what I have pointed out before—that the African negro, South or Central American Indian, and Eastern native, all are alike in this respect, they soon learn who is the man who is fair and just to them and takes a personal interest in them, and to him they will stick like a leech. A kind-hearted, sentimental "boss," but without a keen sense of justice, they will deprise. They all like a little humour, a little of the human side of nature; but sarcasm they abhor.

Poor Sam returned to San Francisco a little before we went home and shortly afterwards died in a lunatic asylum, the result probably of injuries to his head, the cause of which I will describe a little further on.

Often and often used he to turn up at the house with a few wild flowers picked on the mountain side for my wife. At one season of the year the beautiful wild Azaleas grew very plentifully around, and these he was especially fond of bringing in. I think old Sam was a general favourite in camp though his profanity was somewhat of a trial; but to him it meant nothing, there was never a vindictive sense intended to be carried with it; he was too good-hearted for that.

The head carpenter was also a Californian, but in his early youth came, I think, from Nova Scotia. He was an example of a mechanic fitted for a much higher position than he occupied. There was another Californian miner who had some sort of history which we never discovered. He was a rough character when he came to us, but my wife (who loved some of these characters) got him interested in books until he became a great reader and devoured everything he could lay his hands on, and it was wonderful to see how his whole nature seemed to change from that of a man who had no interest in life to one interested in all that was going on in the world.

I was very fortunate in the crowd I had under me ; I think I may say there was hardly one who was not interested in his work, and, perhaps only one who was a bit of a shirker, but I believe that was due more to physical causes. The only real exception was an employee who turned out a complete failure, and was a man sent out from home. He was only with us a very short time, a complete "rotter," and I soon packed him off. My assistant, a Sydney, N.S.W. University man on the mining engineering side, proved a very capable and active help ; while, so far as I remember, another old Britisher I had with me, a Cornishman, also proved a great addition ; in later years I helped to get him into a much higher position for which, from his natural tact and ability, he was well-fitted.

Another of the Americans was the diamond-drill-expert ; he seemed to have no other thought but his loved drill, indeed he almost slept with it like the Italian organman with his organ. He too got on well with the Coreans and trained them so well that, instead of needing a white man for each of our three drills, he managed to run all three by their help. Afterwards we had him in China where he put down what I believe was at the time (and perhaps still is) the deepest borehole in China (some 2,000 feet, short of two feet) with the exception of the well-known Chinese salt-wells which have attained a much greater depth after 200 to 300 years' work upon them ; these latter are another example of how by crude methods this nation in the past was in many ways in advance of Europe. On asking my drillman why he did not make up the two feet to the 2,000 feet, he said, in his matter of fact way, "he guessed he had attained the object for which the borehole was put down, and what was the blank use of adding another foot to it ?"

An interesting feature was our police force. We were allowed to have dynamite or explosives for the mine only under the severest conditions. The Emperor lived, it was said, in terror of being

blown up in his palace by the diabolical use of it against him. He therefore decreed that we should erect a very strong magazine in which to store it, and that a constant guard day and night should be maintained over it by an armed body of police. Again, if any dynamite were stolen the importation of further supplies would be prohibited.

From the Japanese Government we obtained the loan of fifteen picked "Gendarmes." A very carefully worded agreement was drawn up, setting out what their duties were to be. They were to be directly under their Sergeant's command, and in case of any disagreement with us he was to refer the matter to the Japanese Consul, at Pyeng-Yang. Then were set forth our obligations towards them. For instance, two complete suits of uniform in the year, also boots, even laces, buttons, etc., were to be supplied, also the weekly rations to be issued to them were specified, even to the Soy sauce, the basis of much Japanese cooking and of our own Worcester Sauce, which latter has garlic and chili pepper added to it. (By-the-way, how few know that garlic is one of its ingredients!) The whole agreement was so carefully thought out as to the clothing and rations to be issued to them at the different seasons of the year, that we never once had a complaint or disagreement about it. But the hours on which the "Gendarmes" were to go on duty were not set out, it being taken for granted, I suppose, they were to be the usual Japanese ones.

Our Japanese behaved well and never gave me the least trouble, being obedient to orders and punctual and soldier-like in their duties. Only at the start was there any sort of grievance and it arose in this way. The set hours for duty were eight hours on and sixteen off. They accepted the eight without a word of complaint. The store-keeper acted as interpreter, and I said to him very shortly afterwards that I could not help thinking the Japanese had a grievance or were down-hearted, perhaps home-sick; I asked him whether he knew of any grievance, and what was the matter. He replied that there was nothing. A day or two passed and again I pressed him, telling him that if he could not be open I must employ the draughtsman, who was a Japanese and spoke good English. Then he explained that as soldiers they had no business to vent any grievance so long as their contract was being kept, and he had told them so, and was, therefore, not prepared to put it forward on their behalf. "Well," I said, "you need not do so officially, it need only be verbal and no record made of it, so long as I know what the trouble is." Then to my utter amazement it came out that they did not like the shift hours, but instead of eight on and sixteen off,

they wanted twenty-four on and twenty-four off. This change was quickly made and from that day till I left we had no more trouble.

They were afterwards always alert and most useful. With the thermometer twenty degrees below zero have I seen them patrolling night after night. "It was their custom," a phrase I have so often heard natives all over the world use, and custom is habit, which explains much, for human nature always kicks against change of habit. Once create a habit and the most irksome task becomes a custom and no longer continues to depress us. I believe that twenty-four hours on duty and twenty-four hours off, day after day, summer and winter, would soon kill a European, even if the habit were created ; which does not fit in with the theory expressed above.

The Sergeant in charge had been a gymnasium-instructor and also two of his corporals ; very agile and lithe little men they were.



## CHAPTER XXXI

### COREAN RIOT OVER GRAVES

A VERY curious incident occurred in connection with two of these men, which came about thus : for several months I had been in negotiation with the Chief Magistrate of our district for the sale to us of a mill-site situated about one-and-a-half miles from the mine, but unfortunately for us there happened to be a great many graves upon it, always a cause of great trouble not only in Corea but similarly in China. For months I had been dealing through the Magistrate with the families who owned the graves, and had come to a satisfactory agreement with them all, save two families, the owners of three graves. These stood out against me and were determined to blackmail us.

After about a year, as all efforts had failed with them, and as we had to get on with the new mill-foundations, I announced that we were going to place a railing round the graves, and should not require them nor touch them, as they would stand in the middle of the mill on a spot upon which it was not necessary that any machinery should be erected.

Nothing daunted, these two families began propaganda in every village situated for miles round us. Mischief was brewing, but I had not the least notion what form it would take. We had, a little later on, completed our foundations, and had begun the super-structure of the building over the graves. Old Sam, with a big crowd of natives, Japanese and Chinese, under his supervision, were at work cutting out the timbers for the same, when early one morning crowds of Coreans in their white gala garments were to be seen coming over the hills around, all converging towards the mill site.

Sam stuck to his job until suddenly stone-throwing commenced ; at this sort of sport Coreans are probably the finest adepts in the world, for their aim is unerring. Sam and several of the Chinese were knocked down. The two Japanese gendarmes on guard acted promptly. One of them was sent by the other to inform me what was occurring ; the other jumped into a deep little stream almost up to his neck, and immediately fired, and picked off the ring-leader who was encouraging the multitude to come on ; hitherto stone-throwing had only been at a distance. The gendarme

then told them that unless they went back he would pick off every man who advanced. This held them up.

Meantime I had heard what had occurred, and I hastily rang the alarm bell, called our white staff together, and left my assistant to take charge and organize what means of resistance he could devise in case of an attack. With a trusted interpreter and one other of my staff I ran down the hill and along the plain to the mill-site.

Coming up towards the crowd I found all vociferating and shouting loudly, each afraid to come on for there was my one policeman with his rifle levelled at them. Poor old Sam had "come to," and made his way over to me, his head wounds bleeding profusely. I sent him back accompanied by some of our own Coreans whom I had brought with me, but although he apparently soon got over his injuries he was never quite the same again; some brain mischief had most likely been set up.

Getting within calling distance, my interpreter shouted out that if they would be quiet I would come and speak to them, if they would single out four or five spokesmen to discuss the matter with me. After a time all was silent when I told the gendarme to come out and go up to the mine; for it was evident that one soldier could be of no use if the crowd got violent, and perhaps his presence aggravated them.

Crossing the stream, I went first to the ring-leader; he was lying prone on the ground, and had been shot in the hip, and somewhat badly wounded (as it was afterwards proved). Then, speaking to the spokesmen, I said, "the first thing before commencing our palaver is to get a native chair to carry the injured man in up to our hospital where our Japanese doctor will do his best for him." Then we sat down and a huge crowd encircled us. I began by telling them that it was a bad business, that someone was very much to blame, and that we must find out who it was; if ourselves, then we must be punished for it; if themselves then they must be; that we could not settle so serious a question ourselves, the foreigners with the Japanese on one side, and the Corean villagers on the other. I said that they had injured a white man and some of the Chinese, and we had injured only one Corean; that they were very many and if they liked could kill us all; but that if they did so it would only be the beginning of the matter, and then both European and Japanese soldiers would come and destroy them all and their villages; and if we argued between ourselves we might get angry, and that would be very foolish. "Now," I said, "you tell me your chief magistrate is a wise man and has a great mind; he has a good name and is the best magistrate you have ever had; so I

think it would be a wise thing for us all to agree to send for him and let him judge the case. If he says we are in the wrong we will pay the fine, if he says you are then you must all pay it."

They listened attentively and then one of them turned to the crowd and said "this foreigner is a wise man, his words are of good counsel, and it is agreed we send for the Chief Magistrate, and we agree to abide by his decision."

All agreed excepting the two men representing the families of the owners of the graves in question. They wanted to speak but I said, "if we listen to them we shall begin to argue who is right and who is wrong, and we cannot come to a wise decision, for we shall not agree; therefore leave the matter to your magistrate who has a great mind, you tell me; and if so, even I, a foreigner, agree to abide by whatever he may decide." This carried the day.

As the Magistrate lived some two hours' journey away, and as it would be quite five or six hours before he could arrive, I was somewhat anxious as to what might happen in the meantime. I sent all my men back to the mine except my interpreter and one white man, and there we sat talking to the people who grouped themselves all round us; most were out of earshot but our conversation was passed along from one to the other. We, of course, carefully avoided all allusion to the incident of the day, and for an hour or so I told them some funny stories about the foreigner. Later on, I said to them "we shall be hungry if we do not get some food before the magistrate comes; and it will be best to get some in the meantime." The majority went off and gradually the crowd dispersed, so that by the time the magistrate arrived late in the afternoon not more than about a hundred of the former angry crowd remained.

On the hill-side he sat and judged the case, and not till about 8 p.m., did he give his decision which was a heavy fine on all villages around that had taken part in the matter, while the families of the owners of the graves were also fined; and he read them all a very paternal sort of lecture. Of course, this meant that we also had to pay him a good fee for so amicably settling the dispute. Further, as the two families were very poor I agreed to pay their fine on condition they removed their graves; the expense I would pay on a liberal scale; this was agreed to, and what might have been a most serious outbreak ended peacefully, and moreover settled the question about the graves. This was due to the good sense of the people. Had it been an English crowd I am very doubtful if I should ever have got a hearing from it. The moment they agreed to listen to us I felt that we had won.

It was late before I got back to the mine, but I did not forget to send for the two Japanese gendarmes and to praise them for their courage. What puzzled me was why one had jumped into the stream. He was asked this through the interpreter, but he made no reply, plainly indicating that it was too stupid a question, and could not really be put in earnest. On asking a second time he replied "why, the Coreans only had my head to throw stones at as my body was protected." The ring leader we had in hospital many weeks before he was able to get about again, and then it was only as a cripple. I confess it never crossed my mind what the object of the gendarme in getting into the water was until he explained.

One of the two summers we spent at the mine was an anxious time as cholera had broken out badly in the country. In Seoul people were dying in great numbers daily, and already it had broken out in some of our villages on the Concession, when again the Japanese gendarmes came to our assistance. It was at the time when the water-melon season was beginning; of this fruit the Coreans eat immense quantities including the rind. I determined, if it were possible, to prevent all water-melons entering our camp, but how best could it be done?

I consulted the sergeant and he suggested that, as their number were insufficient, we should raise a small Corean force, giving each gendarme two or three under him. We had always had a few Corean police under a fine old Corean who in the old days had acted for many years as Chief of the Police in guarding against ore-stealing in the mine, but they were not dependable when left to themselves. However, under the new arrangement they turned out quite trustworthy, and both the Japanese and Corean police got on well together.

As soon as the Corean miners heard of the new orders prohibiting water-melon eating we nearly had a strike, but though they showed great resentment nothing further happened. Several attempts were made to smuggle the melons into the camp, but our police not only entrapped the culprits, but were given orders to thrash them—which I have no doubt they did. At all events we succeeded in keeping the camp clear of them, and, in consequence, I believe, of cholera; we had only one case in our camp.

In my mind I had always connected cholera and fruit together, hence my taking what to the Coreans seemed so cruel a step as that of depriving them of their much-loved water-melon. It was no use to tell them that I had saved many of them from cholera, how could a nice, cool, water-melon give them so dreadful a disease?

But from what I heard I believe they gave me the credit of thinking that it was only a strange and foolish idea of the foreigner's.

In course of time the inevitable gramophone arrived, and became the topic of conversation among the Coreans ; and when, after some further lapse of time, some Chinese "records" came in they recognized Chinese voices ; why, it was not only foreign spirits boxed up, but Chinese ones as well ! Some would never come near the instrument, whilst others began to even like the foreign music. The Japanese gendarmes, however, were always keen on it.

During our sojourn here we had a visit from an American, an engineer who was sent out to study more especially the alluvial problems around us. He stayed with us a few weeks and we became firm friends ; subsequently he married, and I happened to meet him and his wife just after the event in the deserts of Utah, U.S.A. Later, they came to England and she became a great friend to my wife and daughter. He had been some time in China, and was studying that language, and whilst with me picked up quite a good smattering of Corean. They have now settled down to a Californian life. From this little episode of my life it will be seen how small the world appears to us Mining Engineers. We meet each other in all parts of the world and take it as an everyday occurrence, and think no more about it than friends do when they meet each other in different parts of England—perhaps less.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### TRIP UP THE TA-TONG RIVER—"MUDANG"

IN the late summer, my wife, self, and little daughter, together with her Amah and my Chinese boy Ah Sak, accompanied by one of the American miners, started for a trip up the river to visit some supposed copper mines at the head of the Concession.

The houseboat, an ordinary Corean one, had been fitted up with a little hut built 'midships where were two small bedrooms and a dining room, which latter was opened at either end. Our boatswain, whose post was to stand at the tiller in the high stern of our craft, was the most important man on board, for on him depended our welfare and safety, and under his orders the crew, some six in number, were placed. The family were carried in chairs and no one enjoyed the trip to the river more than the baby. She chattered away to everyone, and seemed thoroughly to understand that she was out for a holiday. At Kokul our boat awaited us (as described above), and also a second one laden with tools, stores, and general supplies for our prospecting camp. Our little hut on the boat, though roughly knocked up, made a most comfortable habitation for the time being, and allowed us, too, to obtain a full view of either bank of the river without going outside.

At 4 p.m. one afternoon we cast off, and continued up the river until 7.30 p.m., when we tied up for the night after having enjoyed every mile of it. We were astir early and after breakfast we once more cast off, and soon after mid-day stopped at the large market-town of Sun Tjan. Here we visited a very typical Corean example of an old Confucian temple; but its principal interest to us lay in the large number of old bronze urns which it contained; many were of extremely artistic shape, and probably were priceless in value. The temple itself seemed to be visited little, if ever, for the dust was thick and covered every part of it, indicating that no visitor had been there recently. The old priest looked very poor, but showed us round with great pride, and especially pointed out the bronzes. I daresay he could easily have been bought to send a good many over to the mine, but we did not tempt him.

Getting back to our boat we found a big crowd of women and children around it begging that the little daughter, who was asleep, might be brought out and shown to them. The old Amah had been

obdurate, but hearing our voices the child awoke from her afternoon sleep, and a more delighted crowd could not be imagined than that which greeted her when her father brought her out. They had never seen a fair-haired, rosy-cheeked baby before; she might have been a goddess, and their remarks and exclamations of wonder and surprise were beyond belief. One would have imagined that their own dark-featured babes would have appealed to them and not a foreigner's (to them) pale-faced child. Many rushed away and came running back with pears or turnips placed in a hastily made saucer of leaves held in the palms of their hands to present to her. The child herself was never frightened by seeing a gaping, chattering crowd all eager to behold her; on the contrary she laughed, and, prompted by her Amah, answered them back with a few words. It was always a pretty sight to see her (so her parents thought) full of mirth and thoroughly enjoying the worshippers.

At 6 p.m. that night we came to some formidable rapids; our two boat-crews towed us up through them, sometimes they were on the banks or jumping from rock to rock, and at other times up to their armpits struggling against the stream. Soon after 7.30 p.m. we had safely cleared them, and tied up at a place called Massambang. Early next morning we visited some gold alluvial diggings lying at the foot of some low red-coloured hills. We left again about 9.45 a.m. and passed a ferry at noon, and by evening reached Suchong; this was a village of about 400 inhabitants, all said to belong to the Yik family who allow no one to reside amongst them unless of this family or clan, which levies toll on all boats going up or down the river.

Here we received a deputation on board from the town-authorities asking that the child might visit the village and be seen by the people. To this we agreed, and her mother and myself escorted her between a row of people who lined the road up to the village, where presents of pears and turnips were first placed before her, and then carried down to the boat and put on board. Her fame had preceded us and at every village we passed, on the Ta-Tong river banks, we always met crowds anxious to view her. My wife, too, was an object of great interest, especially her clothes, but it was the child's fair hair that attracted the greatest attention; of this there could be no doubt, for when we took off her hat and held an umbrella over her there were grunts of approval all round.

All day we worked up through a series of rapids, and it was very hard work for our crew to bring the boats through them, and very skilfully they piloted them, for at times it often looked as if we must be swamped or turn turtle. On the morning of the third day

we were up early and inspected some gold alluvial works in the bed of the river near where we had tied up for the night, and found perhaps the best alluvial prospect I had come across ; but it was just out of our Concession, and so I wasted no further time over it. A little higher up we came on a village of charcoal-burners, and at Buggingan we heard of a silver-mine a few miles distant.

We had now entered a corner of the Kachung district reported to be very rich in pure hæmatite or iron stone deposits, and we found sand fit for casting purposes near here ; quite a trade was being carried on in it. A little higher up we came on a very busy little village—quite the busiest I came across in Corea ; the inhabitants were all at work building river-boats, for which there was a large demand in the lower reaches of the river.

At sundown we arrived off Jongwong which was our destination. Three almost thrilling days had we thus spent upon the river since leaving Kokul, days ever to be remembered, not only for the beauty of the scenery with its numerous rapids so often running between high lime-stone bluffs, but also for the interest the little fair-haired daughter had evoked in the minds of the Coreans. At Jongwong we remained four days camped in our boat, near a small village and with very pretty surroundings.

During this time I was busy visiting some prospects in the vicinity, and we came upon an especially interesting little industry, that of a small iron-furnace turning out what appeared to be a very fine quality of pig-iron used for casting the large iron pots. At a place near Pam-bang, only a few Li away (three Li equal one mile) we came on a coal-outcrop but it was highly pyritic. Five Li again from this place we visited a small whetstone quarry where fifteen men were turning out these stones, 10 in. by 5 in. by 2 in., roughly hewn out, for two-fifths of a penny a-piece.

The mountainous character of the country and the signs of mineral wealth that we came across offered every inducement to prospect the hills, but unfortunately their trend led away out of our Concession. From the top of one Peak (1800 feet high) which we climbed we obtained a splendid view of the country round. A wide lode we discovered here carried a heavy pyrrhotite ore with half per cent. of copper ; we started sinking a shaft and driving a level, and this work was carried on for some time after I left, but eventually abandoned as it showed no signs of improvement. Had it turned out well the spot would have been an ideal one for a mine.

My wife had thoroughly enjoyed her stay here and had found plenty to interest her in the villagers.

Starting back once more we stayed, on our way down the river,



at Kotchinaru, whence we rode over to some old silver-mines by way of "Pyramid valley." These deserved a thorough investigation, but being outside our Concession we wasted no further time on them than to inspect all that we could get at. It was a limestone country and full of caves; had time allowed, it would have been most interesting to have explored these, especially their floors for prehistoric implements or pottery.

Our trip down the river was intensely exciting for we rushed through the rapids, often holding our breath; one blow to our frail craft would have sent her to pieces. At An-ju, half-way down the river we came on an Englishman; to our extreme surprise he turned out to be Messrs. Nobel's Explosive Company's Agent who had been visiting the American-owned Oriental Consolidated Mines far to the north of us, and who was endeavouring to work his way across to our mines; so we took him on board and sent his horses and boys on direct to the mines. W. Walters I think his name was, and a very plucky trip he had made seeing that he was alone and entirely dependent upon native boys, and was himself a stranger to Corea, though not to China; hence perhaps his fearlessness.

We arrived back at the mine after eleven days away, having come round from Kokul by way of the hot springs. These springs are well-known in Corea for their curative properties, and the small village where the baths are located depends for its support on visitors. Our men often used to go for a week-end to take a few baths, but they did not tempt me, and although they offered to clear everyone out of the public bath, I did not fancy a bathe in waters where every diseased person imaginable had bathed. The bath was quite a large one, built under cover, with the hot springs bubbling up continually inside, and with a steady overflow.

We had all enjoyed our trip and benefited from it; the baby had simply had a rollicking time with all the fuss made over her, and she was never upset by anything but was always happy and cheerful, small as she was; to say that she seemed to love to make others happy was no exaggeration. She always had a salutation for the poorest native she might meet, no matter how ugly (for some of the Coreans are inexpressibly plain). The old Amah, too, who never liked to be upset in her regular routine, had enjoyed her trip, and at all events it served as a topic of conversation for our native servants long afterwards.

In a direct line Jongwong was only a day's ride from here, and during the winter I made the trip twice, but the climb down, on my last trip, from the high plateau to our camp there 800 feet below it, was an unpleasant one. I let my horse go and he slid and

tumbled the whole way down, while I sat down, and by the help of a stout, pointed pole slid down a few feet at a time. But it took me a long time to make the descent in this fashion, though it could have been accomplished like a streak of lightning at the expense of my bones.

Soon after arriving back at the mine a regular epidemic of accidents occurred and quickly followed each other; every one of them was preventable, and due to carelessness and stupidity. The first was a case of two men sent up from below through a winze while blasting was going on. From the surveyor we learnt that their lights went out. The man in front quietly stayed on the rungs of the ladder up which he was going. With the force of the air he apparently let go his hold and fell to the bottom fracturing his skull; he was picked up dead. His companion, who was below him, was also carried away by his fall and broke his hip. A few days afterwards a man fell down a winze and was killed, and a day afterwards a similar accident occurred.

Several minor accidents took place about the same time and the Coreans had a meeting to consider the position, when they came to the conclusion that a devil had got into the mine. On asking them how we were to get him out, they said there was an old woman, a witch or sorceress "Mudang," who lived about thirty miles off, and if she came up she would soon catch the culprit; so I agreed to pay about sixty yen (£6) for her expenses, and a number of coolies set out to bring her up to the mine. Meantime only some of the more venturesome would enter it. The old lady, a veritable picture of what we would imagine to be a witch, arrived in state, carried in a kind of Sedan chair, and was escorted to the mine by the whole population of the village.

She was very collected and first took a calm survey of the mine's surroundings at surface. Then she ordered a big fire to be kindled near the entrance to the mine and to be kept burning while she went underground. She was then escorted to the bottom level, where she asked if it was the deepest part of the mine. On being told that there was a small shaft about sixty feet deep in the floor of that level she insisted she must go down it, "for," said she, "the Devil will be hiding from me in the lowest part of the mine." Nothing daunted, she was got into the bucket and was let down this shaft. Arriving at the bottom she was got out of the bucket, and then proceeded to unfold a kind of large apron and with this covered a small hole in the bottom of the shaft; then carefully gathering it up into one fold and tightly twisting and tying up the ends she declared she had caught the devil; and was once more placed in the bucket and

swung up to the level. Here she rested with her precious bundle and then was taken up to the surface through the main shaft. Now, for a poor, old, decrepit-looking woman who had never been in a mine before, it was a plucky thing to have gone down at all, and to be let down sixty feet in a bucket still more so.

Arriving at the surface she immediately went to the bonfire ; it did not burn to her satisfaction and had to be replenished with fire-wood and a big blaze made. After repeating what we presumed were numerous incantations—but no one understood their meaning—she carefully untied the bundle ; then with a sudden jerk she shook out the devil into the fire. She was too wide awake to lose her piece of calico stuff, for this she carefully rolled up and preserved, perhaps for another such occasion. She then announced that the devil had been destroyed and that there would be no more accidents ; after which she returned to her chair and was carried off in state to make her journey home.

Now the curious thing was that we had no more accidents in the mine, a fact I put down to some psychological effect on the miners, who probably went about their work with more assurance and with firmer step, whereas before they had been nervous and lost their senses or heads, though in normal times they would have unconsciously used them as a matter of habit. From that day there was no more difficulty in getting men to go down underground, the devil had been caught and destroyed and no question arose as to the possibility of another entering the mine.

I would take my little daughter (then nearly four years old) down below for an occasional treat. She loved to come and see the miners swinging their hammers, and if my candle went out, as on more than one occasion it did, and left us in the dark, she was not in the least frightened.

At surface we used to employ some of the children of the village to pick out the ore from the waste (which it closely resembled in appearance), but she and her Amah used to love to pick out the good pieces, and often would I meet her loaded up, carrying them home to show me. I had a small case of minerals which I kept for the purpose of showing to Corean miners, asking them if they had seen ore like any of them in the country round ; these she was fond of picking out of their drawers, and soon got to know most of them. Had she grown up I think she would have followed her father's profession, and she would not have been the first woman to become a mining engineer, for in both Australia and Chili we have examples of two very rich women—the latter is said to be the richest woman in the world—who have managed their own mines.

Around the house she had quite a collection of different kinds of stones. As we often used to climb the mountain-sides together she was quick to pick up any likely stone she thought might carry gold.

We had not long got over our mine-trouble when a very sad fatality took place in our stables. One morning I was in the store and happened to ask the store-keeper what a certain black-looking wine-bottle on his desk contained. "Poison for dogs," he replied; I said, "Oh! don't have that about, empty out its contents and throw it away." Instead of doing so he placed the bottle on top of his rubbish basket, and left it thus to be thrown away. That same afternoon I was rung up and told that a "mafu" in the stables was dying. Immediately I rang up our Japanese Doctor and told him to go there at once, and hastened off myself. On my arrival, there lay one of our Mafus (Chinese grooms or stablemen) dead on the ground and the other Mafu (or Mapoo, in Corean) dying alongside him. I recognized the uncorked bottle I had seen in the morning. In the hand of the dying Mafu was still a gourd which had held the poison. Before the doctor arrived the second Mafu was dead. On enquiry I found that a child of one of the Mafus had found the bottle and brought it to his father. Both had evidently thought it was a bottle of European wine or spirits, and had sat down to enjoy its contents. A few days afterwards a cow died, then a calf and pony.

So the stables were held in dread and no one could be got to go near them; the devil had taken possession of them. One of my Corean boys who had been under Hutchinson's training also believed a devil was there, and my wife came upon him emptying two bottles of gin on the ground—bottles he had bought at a fairly high price in the store. He told her, quite seriously, that this would settle the matter. He was making an offering of our spirits to the stables and the devil could not stand such an offering—in fact he felt quite sure that he had already gone. The rest of the community believed this and we were again able to resume the use of our stables.

Thus it will be seen how deeply steeped in superstition these people were; even a European education failed to eradicate it, for this lad could not only read and write English well, but was well-versed in our history, our ways, our customs, and he entered into our sports and our cricket and lawn-tennis (in both games he was particularly good), but he still remained a heathen and practised all the blind customs of heathenism. Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shintoism—all these religions, combined in one, seemed to be his creed, and in fact it is the case with most Coreans.

In our camp we had many Japanese, mostly artisans, but with these I never got into close touch, while with the Chinese I was on very good terms and many a time was called in to settle some family dispute. The Japanese were good workers but always troublesome, forming rings to put up wages. On the other hand the Chinese were good bargainers, but once the terms of a contract were settled, whether going against them or not they always stuck to them; but not so the Japanese. We employed them chiefly as brick-makers, stone masons, and bricklayers; also as timbermen in the mine.

The Koreans were used as miners and sawyers. Some fifty miles away we bought our timber standing, and then contracted with the Koreans to fell and cut it up into logs, float them down the river and cart them to the mine where they were sawn up into the different sizes wanted; at which sawing the Korean is an adept. At first we tried making an English-sized brick, but we soon found that the Chinese thinner and smaller brick was better suited to being handled by the bricklayers, whose hands—smaller and more delicately shaped than those of our own people—were unable to grasp the heavier bricks with anything like the speed with which they could lay ones of their own size.

About the same distance away as the Ta-Tong river we had another one down which our timber came; here we had our saw-pits, a picturesque little spot with its green, translucent river flowing by; it was an ideal ride to it through the fields of millet and buckwheat, and very enjoyable it used to be to canter through them on our inspection-visits. These little picnic-trips made very pleasant interludes in our daily life; as one looks back now, how strange and even weird some of those daily scenes we passed through seem, and yet at the time through habit we took them as nothing extraordinary in the routine of our daily life!

A trip to the top of the hill behind our camp, though a stiff climb, was well worth the trouble, for the views obtained from it were extensive; but I will not attempt to describe these. My object in penning these notes has not been to write descriptions of scenery or any detailed account of the manners and customs of the Koreans, but rather (as the title of my volume infers) to jot down the incidents and experiences through which I passed, with here and there some brief account of the history and very general features of the people and country surrounding me. For a more interesting account of Korea Mrs. Bishop's "Korea" is well worth reading; and (for a better and more trustworthy account) Hulbert and Gale have written several most interesting books; after their many years in

Corea and their complete mastery of its language, they are in every way sounder and more authoritative writers than Mrs. Bishop. Their books are well worth reading and give a better idea, too, of the chief characteristics of the Coreans. It is long since I had the pleasure of reading them, but I hope to repeat it when time permits.

Nearer camp we had a few favourite spots; one dear to our sweet little daughter was particularly fascinating, as we looked down the slopes of a little valley through which trickled a small mountain stream, while, almost lost to sight, lay a small Korean village. Here we used to stroll with the child and her Amah and pick the wild flowers of which there were many; it was all so remindful of the land of "The Morning Calm," so reposeful after the bustle and turmoil of our camp, where the atmosphere was one of civilization attempting to do away with the calm and peacefulness of these valley solitudes.

Thus the days passed, none without something happening—some new feature in the mine, or some little event in the town, a visit from the magistrate of our district, or of some "Yangbans" (gentlemen) from some distant part come to see what the foreigners were doing. Then we used to get up a "sing song" amongst the white staff, with a few Japanese or Coreans twice or thrice a month. Once a week we had whist-drives or played euchre with our staff (invited in turns) and usually once a week my wife had a tea party for her Korean lady friends when, as I have said before, all we men folk had to keep away from the house. Frequently we had some "Kugean" parties, as already described. So in this out-of-the-way corner of Corea we found the days pass pleasantly, and we enjoyed our life thoroughly.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### THE EMPEROR OF JAPAN'S BIRTHDAY

IN November we kept the Emperor of Japan's birthday—a great day for our Japanese employees—a description of which I give from a letter written home by my wife at that time. “How we kept the Emperor's birthday on the fourth of November.” “Not the poor Emperor of this country, secluded in his new and ugly palace in Seoul, but the Emperor *par excellence* of the East, the Emperor of Japan, the 121st descendant from a direct dynasty of father to son. This wonderful man has, within the last thirty years, brought his country out of mediævalism, feudalism, and orientalism, into the light and culture of the Twentieth Century of civilisation. He has given his people a Constitution, a Parliament, and an army, and encouraged arts and sciences in every way. He has 200,000 soldiers, which could be put in the field at six weeks' notice, and we all know from recent events in China how well the Japanese soldiers have held their own among all the European troops, and what praises General Gaselee bestowed upon their ability. Their transport was magnificent, even to providing tiny bundles of charcoal, each with so many sticks counted in them, for camp fires, and to bottles of aerated-water enough for the whole army's consumption, to prevent their drinking China's proverbially bad water with its risk of typhoid fever.

“Then the Crown Prince, instead of the usual multiplicity of wives, has chosen the daughter of noble parents and wedded her publicly with a religious service, and the orthodox white satin and orange flowers. She is now the proud mother of a little son to carry on the unbroken dynasty, the 123rd of the line. Is it any wonder that such an Emperor is adored by his people ?

“Even in this out of the way place the Japanese community have kept his forty-ninth birthday with all their accustomed festivities. We are isolated among mountains from everyone else, so I cannot write about crowds of witnesses and crushes at the gates etc., but the Japanese preponderate over other nationalities (saving, of course, the natives). Owing to there being fifteen policemen and a good number of other workmen, these carried out the decorating of the natural avenue on a little plateau resting on a steep little hill-side, the site chosen for the wrestling and fencing matches.

They obligingly cut steps all the way up to ease our climb, and at the top was a large green plane-tree arch. The plane-tree in Japan always signifies longevity and happiness, and hence a miniature one is invariably among a bride's trousseau. This was the entrance to an enclosure formed by cords and red blankets out of the "store" for tea, and for the tiny altar. This altar is a relic of Shintoism and the worship of the Emperor (or rather I should say "homage") and was draped all over with white material, and hung up over it were the portraits of the Emperor and the Empress, not by any means flattering. The Empress was dressed in European style, though in what fashion it beats me to describe—a red velvet train, with tabs of white satin descending from the waist, and long white gloves. But you will know the sort of chromos they were, for I've often seen our own Royal Family caricatured in the same disgraceful way.

"On a little white table were two white loaves, a bottle of wine, and a glass, and all went up first to do homage by drinking a little wine, but leaving the loaves untouched; they signified happiness. On the table was a vase but, a fall of snow having killed the last of the Michaelmas daises and chrysanthemums, it was filled with a green and brown branch of leaves, arranged in the usual decorative taste of the Japanese.

"At eleven o'clock a salute was fired, and at two o'clock we all found our way up to the seats provided for us to witness the sports performed by the police with wooden weapons. The style of fencing was quite different from that practised in the West. The sword was grasped by both hands most inelegantly, giving the combatants the appearance of jerky Dutch dolls, and they wore petticoats from the waist, adding still more to their doll-like appearance. There was a combat between a short sword and a long one, showing the short sword's superiority, for at the moment they closed the long sword was decidedly out of it. Then another feat between sword and bayonet. By the repeated cracks on the bayoneter's helmet, and the noise they made, there was no doubt the advantage lay with the sword. We then had an unmusical war song and a queer war dance; followed by wrestling. Japanese wrestling is noted for its dexterity and is an art in Japan. So much is it admired, that I believe jitsui schools have been started in London. We saw several examples of throwing and binding a man some of which I remember seeing illustrated in one of our magazines. A great deal of bowing took place between the performers, both at the beginning and end of each exhibition.

"I, being the only European woman, was asked to distribute the



prizes, and so hastily learnt one Japanese sentence to say to each recipient—'Omedeto Gozames,' meaning 'congratulations be to you.' As we had no shops at hand and only a store containing necessaries, the choice was limited. I started on prize No. 1, with a big box containing 500 cigarettes, and then the number of prizes gradually descended to a clothes brush, a brush and comb, a tooth brush, a bottle of blacking—decidedly the heaviest if not the most valuable—until I ended up with several tiny Japanese towels; and all seemed quite pleased. They on the contrary presented me for my trouble (not that I considered it as such) with quite a beautiful box of chocolates. After that we scattered ice cakes among the children, for the children and the poor are always remembered on every public occasion in Japan; there is a certain kind and form of cake for every ceremony, these were small, white, sweet, and square-shaped ones. There being no little Japanese children here to receive the bounty, we threw them down among the dirty little Coreans. They are so accustomed to their own national sport of stone-throwing that they thought we were throwing stones at them, and threw them back with great vigour and force. It was a long time before they discovered what they were, when they commenced to pocket them.

"After that we were entertained at a banquet in our nice little Japanese doctor's house, or office as we call his consulting room up here, and despite the odour of iodoform we did full justice to the good things provided. We drank to the Emperor's health, as they in return drank to our King's, and then there were all sorts of toasts and speeches. The doctor and one of the policemen sang a duet about the plane tree and longevity. I only wish I had not had the policeman opposite to me, for his grimaces, his intense seriousness, the way he drew in his breath and shut his eyes, the extraordinary sounds he managed to produce, were all too much for my gravity, and I did not know how to conceal my laughter. But it seemed a serious business, and even the singing of this song was an honour, for it is very old and only rendered on very special occasions. I think the whole thing was very surprising to the Coreans.

"While we were being entertained by the Committee in the doctor's house, a banquet was being given in the arena to the Yang-Bans and Corean officials employed on the Mine. Our dear old Chief of the Police had recovered from a bad cold in time, I am glad to say. He is a thorough gentleman, and I only wish I spoke Corean, or he English, that we might have a chat together. Luckily, although we had had a heavy fall of snow the day before, the sun had melted it, and the day was deliciously bright and crisp. As we went home

we saw a fairyland of Japanese lanterns, and indeed we had all thoroughly appreciated the forty-ninth birthday of His Majesty, the Emperor of Japan."

As the autumn passed the weather began to turn very wintry, and by about the tenth of December all the rivers were frozen. Snow had fallen and we were practically shut up for the winter, even then we always found there was plenty to be done, and some passing event of interest. A Japanese dinner, for example, would be got up with every dish Japanese-cooked, or our Korean staff would give a dinner or some kind of entertainment, and taken all round we were a very contented, if not happy, party.

During the latter part of November we were surprised one day to receive a telegram from a brother Mining Engineer to say that he and his wife were in Seoul, and would like to pay us a visit. It was very cold, the rivers were already beginning to freeze, and there was no wheeled or sleigh traffic, for the Koreans have not learnt the use of the sleigh and only the use of wheels in a very crude cart. So our friends had a most formidable journey to make in order to reach us; they would have to ride the whole way, and in intense cold for the thermometer then registered many degrees below zero. Again, the roads over which they would have to pass were known to be infested with robbers. We, of course, telegraphed back that we should be delighted to put them up if they could dare to venture on the journey.

They arrived safely one afternoon after a journey of about 250 miles, having had to put up on the way at the dirty little Korean Inns. She was a very handsome woman, an American, and full of life and fun. In our sitting-room we had an open fireplace, and over it we sat talking till after midnight. My wife had not met one of her own sex of "white" people for some time, and it was a real treat and a relief to her to have for a couple of weeks the society of a lady, and especially of one so delightfully refreshing. We retired soon after midnight; about an hour afterwards, a knock came at our door, and there was the lady herself in a great state of mind to tell us her husband was in agony, and would I go to him? Both his feet were badly frostbitten, and though he had sat by the fire all the evening they had not thawed; but a hot-bottle and warm blankets had revealed what had happened. I called up our Japanese doctor who three times painted them with iodine in the night. They were severely frost-bitten and at the end of a fortnight he had to use a stick to get about with.

Again they set out on the return journey though riding was difficult for him. That visit made a very pleasant break, for all

through those months of cold we were completely isolated, even the Koreans not caring to travel. Save for the arrival of the post-bag we had nothing to remind us of an outside world. Nevertheless, we enjoyed the dry, bracing cold and cloudless skies. After years in the tropical and sub-tropical climates I had been somewhat nervous about facing a northern winter, similar to that of a Siberian one, but I enjoyed it. One of the villages near us used to hold a market-day about once a fortnight ; it was a great source of attraction for our miners to go over and get drunk in—for the Korean miner loves his drink—but many a one coming home on a dark night was picked up frozen to death. Although they knew the danger and how many had thus lost their lives their knowledge had no effect on these inconsequent people.

One night about 11 p.m. my wife felt certain she heard the sounds of someone calling. I went out, got a Japanese policeman, and together we searched along the road whence the sound had come but we found no one. Again she was positive she heard an occasional cry, so once more I set out, alone this time, to search for the supposed man in trouble, and just as I had again given up the quest I heard a cry a little below where I stood. Working my way round to the base of a twenty foot bluff on which I had stood, I found a Korean drunk. I sent a policeman to fetch him in and it was found he had fallen over the bluff and broken his leg. Had it not been for my wife's insistence that she heard cries, that Korean would have added one more to those found frozen to death.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### A MEMORABLE WINTER

THE winter wore on and we little thought what it had in store for us. Our Japanese doctor's wife, a very pretty little Japanese lady, developed rapid consumption and in a very short while left us all. The Japanese custom is for the husband to show no signs of grief, nevertheless we could all feel that his was a sad loss. The funeral was carried out in full Japanese style, everything was white—white artificial flowers, white clothes, white standard bearers and a white coffin. On the hill across the valley, facing our house, a huge pyre was erected on which was placed the coffin. Soon the flames burst out and began to consume it, when suddenly the lid of the coffin burst open and the little body rose up and sank back again. It was a ghastly sight. As we retired late that night the funeral pyre was burning fiercely, casting its glare across the valley. The little doctor went about his work as usual and made no reference to his loss. An only son about the same age as our little Justine, then four years of age, was left motherless. He himself was an army doctor on leave and was a well-known medical-man in Japan, having been selected to take charge of the huge Japanese hospital at Neuchuang during the great outbreak of cholera that took place there about two years previous to this time.

In the early part of the year we held our little one's birthday, and her cake was decorated with four tiny, wax candles and four small silk Corean national flags. I am told that this flag was only once seen in our own home waters, floating at the masthead of a venturesome little Corean sailing ship that had made its way into the Thames. Those four little flags I still have and they wave over my library mantelpiece. It was not long afterwards that I happened to say to my wife "I have a presentiment that child is not destined long for this world." I spoke of our own little one, for she always seemed so unearthly to me—too angelic. My wife, startled, exclaimed "Oh! don't speak like that." "Well," I replied, "I feel it to be so."

It was ten days after this that one Sunday morning the child did not seem up to much and was a bit hoarse. Calling in the doctor he thought she was a little bronchial. All day she preferred to nestle in mine or her mother's arms—so unlike her—but otherwise

she did not seem ill, for she laughed and talked much as usual. Early next morning she was playing with her dolls in bed and seemed to be no worse, but by breakfast time a great change had come over her and she had every symptom of being ill. As the day wore on she got rapidly worse. The Japanese doctor asked me to telegraph to Pyeng-Yang for some Japanese medicine to be sent by special messenger which the Japanese Consul would send him. So a Japanese telegram was sent with special instructions to send by a quick runner.

That evening I selected six good runners and sent them out in relays on the road to hurry up the medicine by passing it on from one to the other. The fastest runner was the lad of the stable-episode, and him I sent away first, and so on, each having a shorter distance to travel. The Doctor did not tell me what the medicine was. I still thought the malady was some form of bronchial trouble, especially as he ordered a kettle to be kept steaming in her room. All that night we watched her closely, for we, both my wife and self, saw she was passing away from us. As the first rays of the sun came penetrating her room the little spirit fled from its earthly tenement and only the little clay mould of what she had been lay in my arms. It was all so sudden, so rapid, for she had never had a day's illness in her life, and had been always so gay and lively and beloved as a veritable pearl both by her mother and her father.

Then it was I noticed that our doctor was taking every precaution to disinfect everything, and forbade anyone to come to the house, and only then did it flash on me what she had died from—it was diphtheria, a sporadic case of it, for we knew of no other case around us. It was "serum" for which the doctor had sent, but, at the time, he never gave me a clue as to what it was. Heart failure was the immediate cause of her death. The messenger arrived not half-an-hour after she had peacefully passed away; he had not known the road and had missed it, and came a long way round, so did not meet my runners.

It was then February and the cold was intense; there was no European cemetery near us and we decided to keep the little body in a cave before sending it away to Chemulpo, there to be buried. It was impossible then to get Coreans to carry the coffin down for a distance of some 260 miles. Five minutes' walk from our house was a large cave, so I gave orders to erect a door at its entrance. In our own house I had to read the burial service—a severe task for any father to do; the staff insisted on being present, infection or no infection, and so we all knelt round the little coffin for the last rites. It was a lovely day, bright and intensely cold, and as we

wended our way along the path leading to the cave we were met by the whole village all standing dressed in clean white gala garments, and all so silent ; there was no whispering or talking as there would have been amongst an English crowd. They might have been statuette-angels as we passed through that strangely still and silent crowd, a clear pathway having been left for us to go through them. Our surprise was great when we came to the cave, for on entering we found it lined throughout with evergreens, and at its head were three large crosses made out of them. There we laid the little coffin to await the break up of winter when we intended to send it away on its long last journey to Chemulpo.

I asked some of my staff afterwards where the evergreens had come from ; none of them knew of any near us, the hot-springs was the only locality where there might be evergreens, around us there was not a sign of vegetable life, nothing but the eternal snow and rocks where they peeped out from it. Neither did any of them know anything about the evergreens until they saw the Coreans bringing them in, so they had not prompted the idea. It was a pretty thought of the Coreans, and the fact that those Confucians erected the three crosses, so beautifully intertwined and set up, appealed to the hearts of the parents who mourned their darling. Let not anyone say Eastern people are immovable and lack sympathy, here was visible evidence to the contrary ; and still more marked, perhaps, was their whole manner and demeanour.

I omitted to say that before we took the coffin out of the house the Chinese sent a deputation into me asking as a special favour that they might be allowed to go in and pay their chin chins to the dead. This, too, I had not the heart to refuse them, and it was pathetic to see these poor coolie-class people making obeisances to the last that remained of our loved little one.

For nearly two months the daily pilgrimages to the cave continued ; this, to my wife and self, was like prolonging the agony, and I was glad for her sake when at last the weather broke and the Coreans offered to set forth on the long overland journey. Eight Coreans and three gendarmes of the Japanese Police force and our dear old Head of the Korean Police formed the cortège, and the time came to bid adieu to all that remained of our pearl. As they set forth one morning, it was snowing steadily and the paths were very slippery but my wife and self accompanied the cortège out of camp for about two miles when, bidding our final adieux, we turned sorrowfully back. My wife bore her trial wonderfully, and it was always a marvel how she kept up and would not let her grief be seen by others, or allow her own sorrow to damp in any way the

lives of those around us. The poor old Amah was broken down and, I think for months, cried daily, and often declared "all same suppose she belong to me."

I covered the coffin with the Union Jack and gave the gendarmes to understand that they must tell the Coreans that they had to respect the English Flag, for I knew how the villagers would object to the dead being brought into their villages for the night. Our good friends the Consul and his wife at Chemulpo received the little coffin into their own house, and from it the funeral was conducted. There, in that European cemetery, laid out on a small promontory, rest the remains of our little daughter, and not far from her, as already stated, are the graves of the heroic Russian sailors who faced the whole Japanese fleet in their two small ships. My wife designed a tombstone, a flat white one shaped in the form of a scroll with a little curb edging of similar stone surrounding it and with posts of the same material at its corners which carry a little, green, painted chain held between them. In the old and beautiful churchyard of Western Turville, Bucks, may be seen a replica of that same grave, but below it now lie the remains of that little one's mother.

Soon after the death of the little child my wife and I, while out walking along one of our paths espied a Corean pony led by a little Mafu boy, and sitting between the two packs which it carried was a foreign lady; we wondered who could she be. On coming up to us we were greeted by the hearty laugh of Miss W., who, at the moment saved herself from a nasty fall as her horse slipped down. Miss W. was a missionary of the American Episcopalian Mission, a graduate, too, of Berkeley University, California, and a lady who had consecrated her life to the Coreans. She had come all the way from Seoul, her only escort the small Mafu boy, through a country where robbery of travellers was common. Well, she had heard of our loss, and that my wife was the only European of her sex at the mine, and so she had come to stay with us; and if ever there was a good Samaritan it was she.

She remained with us a fortnight and was always so pleasant with her bright cheery laugh. We long remembered her visit, and one of our greatest pleasures was some years later to get her to come home by way of England for her well-earned vacation, and we had the most delightful visit from her.

Her up-country visit to us was cut short by the receipt of a telegram from some of the Pyeng-Yang missionaries saying that one of their number, a doctor, had been taken ill with typhus, and would she go to nurse him for there was no one to spare there to do it? Without a moment's hesitation that very morning she started

off for Pyeng-Yang, to make a journey of some forty to fifty miles beyond it, when it was difficult to get Coreans to carry even our mails. It was simply amazing to think of this bright creature travelling thus all alone in order to nurse a typhus patient. Only two days ago I received a postcard from her telling me one of my old Korean interpreters was ill and suffering from tuberculosis, and that she was going to see him. All these years she has continued to carry on her loved mission-work and to bring happiness and hope into many a poor, little, bedraggled, dirty village.

She is an example of the true missionary spirit, and of those for whom, as I said, I have the highest admiration ; I would that all missionaries were like her, but I am happy to say there are many like her, though not all. The black sheep of the flock are picked out by the merely superficial critic as typical of the average missionary ; it is a slander upon them, nevertheless where there is smoke there is usually some fire, and I regret to say that the anti-missionary critic has some truth in his criticism. But, regarding missionaries as a whole, he is a slanderer who holds up individual cases of rogerly and dishonesty (found amongst some of them) as typical. In Corea a large amount of their success has been due to the different sects combining to map out the several sections of the country for their individual work (thus preventing overlapping), the only exceptions being the Roman Catholics and our own Church.

As the spring burst upon us our hill-sides behind our house were a glorious bloom of colour, the wild Azaleas covering them with their beautiful blossoms and foliage. Then our gardens became a centre of interest, and it was astonishing to see how quickly plants sprang up after the hard winter where not a sign of even vegetable life had been ; in a very short time we were again amply-supplied with fresh vegetables.

My wife interested herself in many ways, and was a perfect "brick" as we boys used to say at school. I knew she was dying to see her two children at home, but never a word did she say though her heart must have been half-breaking, but bravely she went about regardless of herself, only seeking to make others happy. I was, too, most anxious for her to return home, for the loss of our little one must have been doubly trying to her, all alone without the companionship of her own sex, but out of loyalty to my firm I felt that the condition of the mine did not yet warrant my leaving it, at all events not until I could safely leave it in other hands. Accordingly, I agreed to stay on until the late autumn, and arranged for my relief to be sent out in time ; I felt that to keep her here another winter would be unjust and unbearable to her. I



wanted her to go home, but nothing I could say would induce her to do so. "No," she said, "I could not bear to think of you here alone." So I decided to arrange for our home-going towards the end of the year. All—both our staff and natives—were so kind and sympathetic, knowing what our loss was to us, and as the child had been a great favourite in camp they too felt the loss of her prattle and the pleasant little ways she had of greeting them.

So the months passed, but notwithstanding the keenness of our loss we were not by any means a melancholy camp; our efforts were more than ever put forth to make things pleasant and to keep all in good cheer. So our staff were constantly at our house in turn, and we entered into their entertainments. It was always a mystery to me how well my wife got on with the roughest men. Their language would often come out in spite of themselves, but she had the happy knack of laughing it off, yet showing her disapproval. She had been brought up in luxury and refinement and was herself of an artistic temperament, yet she seemed to be always at home with this type of humanity, and they loved her, and we altogether had most enjoyable times. Humanity the world over is the same at bottom, and a good woman, I believe, can bring the good to the surface. This terrible war is undoubtedly showing us how true this is, especially at the front, where a life and death struggle brings kindred spirits together; however far apart they may be by reason of birth or education, it brings them into closer and more sympathetic contact with each other, and then they find out how much they have in common.

As the summer wore on it became evident that the bottom of the payable ore had been reached in the mine, and now our problem was to erect a mill and aerial tramline to it, in order to get out the gold left still standing in the ore-reserves of the mine. This was put in hand in good time and eventually, as before pointed out, they were erected, and the gold was finally obtained by my successor, a very able engineer. Although over military age he has during the war done more than his share of fighting, and is at this moment recovering from the effects of overstrain after over two years' continual fighting at the front.

All through the summer we used to have our "Ku-ge-an," or "sight see," visitors who always gave us something to study about them, more especially the different views they took of us, which they were not bashful about expressing while being taken round the house.

At last the time came to pack up and to send our things home in front of us by sea, retaining only a small kit for ourselves—not an

easy matter for any woman to arrange. My wife had sent home for a few serviceable things to be sent out to her for our journey home, amongst them an alpaca dress, alpaca being one of the best materials to stand rough wear and tear when travelling. The box arrived, but alas! the dress had been stolen. Now, as a curious coincidence, I must jot down the following incident in connection with it.

When we arrived home a few months later, I happened one day to get into a London bus, and there, sitting opposite me, I recognized the wife of one of the outside Custom Officers at Chemulpo, dressed in an alpaca costume. I took particular note of the buttons and cut, and describing it afterwards to my wife the solution to the loss of her dress was apparent.

Our departure and journey to Seoul I leave for my wife to tell about further on.

After spending a few days with our friends in Seoul we left for Chemulpo. There we paid our adieux to the little grave, so dear to us; there we left her, laid to rest in that land of "the morning calm." The whole environment of the cemetery, situated a little way outside the town with its numerous shrubs and trees, and located on that small promontory around which the rippling little waves were breaking, with the sun shining brightly, was so emblematic of sweet repose that the last parting even with her grave—all that remained to us, though it contained but her dust—was one that brought a sense of contentment to our hearts though they were heavy at the thought of having to leave her remains in this far-distant country. I leave it to the many who have gone through a like experience to enter into our feelings as we then went on board our steamer; as she steamed out of the harbour we stood with straining eyes rivetted on that one little spot, so dear to us, fast disappearing from view. As we walked that deck to and fro, arm in arm, how we recalled all the sayings of that little one! So the world goes on, and history repeats itself in the lives of us all, but how wondrous it is to those who have faith to believe that this world is but a school in which one is learning a lesson whereby the purposes of God are being fulfilled. "Now we see through a glass darkly but then face to face," he who realizes that these things are so enters in spirit into the real land of the "morning calm."

## CHAPTER XXXV

### UNSAN MINES TO IRKUTSK

Now I will give the rough diary of our journey home which my wife wrote for that other little daughter whom we had left with her Granny in England.

“ A short diary of our journey home, via Manchuria, Siberia, Russia, Germany and France.”

“ We left Unsan, where we had been living for many months, on Sunday, October 19th, 1902, at eleven o'clock in the morning, to take a long overland journey to Seoul, carried in chairs on the shoulders of Corean coolies. We had fourteen bearers, an interpreter, two policemen, one a Japanese and the other a Corean, Ah Sak my husband's servant, a coolie who waited on me, whom I called my 'lady's maid,' and five pack ponies with their mafus. Altogether we were rather an imposing procession on the quiet roads in the depths of the country.

“ Being Sunday, all the miners were at liberty, and flocked up to the house to say goodbye. It was like a fair, and we felt quite sorry to say farewell to many of them. At the store we were photographed and then proceeded on our way accompanied by Cho-sa-quen-Kim, the old Chief of Police, as far as the Hot-Springs. There we made out first halt, and ate our lunch in Cho-sa-quen's home, specially cleaned out for us. Arrived at 'Chaps' at 5.30 p.m., a dirty village by the river, where everybody seemed to be killing a pig in the main street, the screams of the martyrs and their white carcasses were anything but pleasant. Ah Sak cleaned out a room for us in a very dirty house, and got supper, cooking it in the street near the suspended body of a pig. My camp-bed was under the main-beam of our room, where I saw, by a dirty bundle of rags, the house-devil resided. He did not disturb me in the least though, and despite dirt and visitors I slept pretty well.

“ *October 20th.*—Awake by 5.30 a.m. and off by 6.30 a.m. in the light of the moon and stars, over a range of hills covered with firs from which we looked down on a broad river that swept its base. People would rave over the scenery if it were Scotland. Our hotel bill, I forgot to add, came to 600 cash—about a shilling and sixpence. About noon we stopped at an inn for lunch—one room with six doors in it, each door crowded with spectators, women and children. I

found a friend here—having finished my ‘tiffin’ I sat myself on a box outside, as a sort of peep-show for the vast crowd, when an old woman sat herself down on half my box and began a voluble conversation. I said to T. ‘I don’t understand a word she says but I evidently please her.’ I talked to her in English and she answered me in Corean, and I laughed and she laughed, and the crowd laughed, and it was all very sociable. I gave her a biscuit, and she gave me a pear, and finally I called Yi, our interpreter, and asked ‘why all this friendliness?’ It seems that this very enterprising old lady, being told of the wonders of the machinery at our mine, had walked over eighty Li to see it, and there saw me, and said I had been very kind to her. I cannot remember anything in particular, but we usually gave our chance visitors a few lumps of sugar, an empty wine bottle, or old tins; but, ah me! these people think so much of so little!

“Arrived at the village of Song-Dong at 6.30 p.m., found our room in a backyard, also the ponies’ stable, and our supper being cooked in the yard. Fried chicken! Fifty miles nearer home, and we have over 7,000 yet to do! The autumn tints are marvellous, exactly:—

Silver and pearl white sky,  
Hills of deep amethyst,  
Bracken to gold changed by  
Autumn, the Alchemist.”

“*October 21st.*—Up and off by 5.30 a.m. I don’t often see the sun rise, but I did this morning, for as we were waiting for the ferry to cross the river it came up gloriously behind the hills, and dispelled the chill morning mists. A candy pedlar was crossing with us, so T. treated all the chair-coolies to some. It looked so nice that I should have liked to have eaten some myself, but I refrained—I have seen the manufactories! Stopped for tiffin, and I was interested in seeing our ponies feeding on a lot of chaff in nearly boiling water with a sprinkling of beans which they were chasing round and round the trough. The ponies and their food are our daily trial. The food takes a good two hours to prepare and the mafus would fain stay behind, but our plan is to get our ponies well on in front and never allow them to lag behind us. Our comfort depends on them, for they carry our beds and bedding, food, cooking utensils, and cook.

“Arrived at Sin-Long-Suan, a tiny village, in the afternoon, here we are to stay for a few days, and have got a tiny one-roomed house with the Kang fire underneath, a tiny door, back and front, and two still more tiny windows; we’ve spread our oiled paper on the floor and our beds are on it ready for us to turn in; the village is

exceedingly pretty, with a river running through it. T. is now discussing to-morrow's plans with Yi. He is going up a mountain to see some old mines and I am going to stay here.

"*October 22nd.*—T. got up early and was off. He took Yi, the Corean policeman and ponies, leaving the Japanese policeman, Ah Sak, and the 'lady's maid' with me. I sat in my room reading and had many visitors, for no English woman has ever been here before; I, therefore, am a great 'Ku-ge-an' or 'sight see' as they call it. Made a terrible discovery—our room was infested with big B's—insect powder no use. Nothing can be of any use. They swarm and we've to bear it for a few more nights.

"*October 23rd.*—T. off again up to the mountain—he wasn't sorry to get up. Not a wink of sleep did we get. Never did we endure such misery—and the room looked cleaner than any other we had had. Cold and wet it is too, so I cannot get the bedding out into the air. My amusement has been to sit at the door and watch a piece of meat being cooked. The woman had to make a fire-place first out of three stones. She could not fit these together at all, so the dirty husband turned to and after a time the stones were fixed. The pot was then balanced on the top of them and a fire lit underneath, burning despite the rain. Several visitors have been to see the pot, and several boys have crouched round keeping the fire going. The old grandfather has hovered round, and finally the baby was tied on to his back, and he went off with it for a walk. T. hopes to finish shortly and then we shall get away. It will take us four-and-a-half more days to reach Seoul.

"*October 26th.*—Left this morning after five terrible nights. We crossed three mountains, did a good deal of walking to save our coolies, for we are trying to make a hundred li a day,—we got into a little village at dusk, it looked sodden and wretched, and I was disheartened when I saw two dirty women and a dirty baby turn out of the room we were to occupy. It smelt so stuffy and was full of filthy bundles. However, we had to have that or none, and Yi turned it out and swept it, and we went in. To my surprise we had a good night, the only disturbance was from fleas, a great improvement on Suan. The old woman was up at 3 a.m. cooking the coolies' breakfast, and at 4.30 a.m. we were en route again. I saw a lovely sunrise, and the morning star glowing in a rosy background. We were worried all the morning by trying to urge on the ponies who seemed to flag.

"*October 27th.*—I was interested to-day in the coolies' chow, or food. Each man has an artistic little table to himself, and on it a big brass bowl of rice, a smaller one of cabbage, and tiny cups of

pickles and turnips, a pair of chopsticks, and a brass spoon, all this only costs about 1d. to 2d. We are coming to an end of our bovril and tinned soups. We ought to have provided more soup, and less tongue and meat, for I have quite come to the conclusion that soup is better than anything else for this sort of travelling.

" *October 28th.*—Yesterday we did our usual quantity of lis, and arrived at night at a tiny village with quite a big inn. Ah Sak had gone on before, and was on the verandah unpacking. I always ask ' what sort of a place is it, Ah Sak ? ' and last night he said ' welly nice,' and so it was—a big room, and to crown it all freshly built, so that we had a good night. Getting up so early and travelling all day makes me very tired. Another day found us climbing two mountains then passing through many fields, brown with ripened beans, millet, rice, etc., until 12 o'clock, when we emerged on to the main road leading to Seoul. It really is a good road and the inns not quite so bad. We had stopped for tiffin at a village under the hill, on the top of which is a walled town. Yi says that a Yang-ban in the first Japanese war had his head cut off here. They found the body and, not being able to come across the head, the then Emperor had a golden head made which was buried with the body. To deceive the people he had three graves made all alike, and each one guarded, so that no one knew in which grave to find the spoil. Also the city was walled in memory of this brave soldier whom his king delighted to honour in this funny way. Our chair-coolies carry us along without, I think, any feelings as to our personalities. We might have been passionless Buddhas, or the Emperor's picture, for all the heed they gave us. We arrived late at — and very tired. Our room was full of cockroaches and fleas as usual. The place was not prepossessing. I felt dead beat, but revived after supper. They lit the ' Kang ' fire under our room and the heat was unbearable, our feet were almost roasted. These ' Kangs ' are wonderful for a cold climate, but it isn't cold enough just now to appreciate them.

" *October 29th.*—T. got us up, as he said, at 4.30 a.m. but discovered his watch was an hour fast, so it was really 3.30 a.m. We tramped along in the dark for some time, and Yi became communicative on the subject of devils. They abound in Corea, according to the ignorant superstitions of the people. He says they are red, and they play a great deal, if any woman finds a stone in her jar of water in the morning she knows it is a devil who has put it there. We often find trees tied up with bits of rag and a great heap of stone at the foot of them, these stones are presents to the devils living in the tree.

" We reached Song-Do city at noon. It is an ancient capital of

Corea. Of course it is a walled city, the wall climbing up precipitous mountains and down again through valleys. It is large, but decayed now, and mostly given up to agriculture, especially of gin seng, a peculiar medicinal herb, which is a government monopoly, and is exported to China, where it is sold for large sums of money. It was market-day, and it was most interesting to see all the different kinds of crops we had passed through being harvested in the country and exposed for sale in the town—great sheaves of wheat and barley and brilliant red chilis. In the street we spotted a very nice old cabinet which we bought as a reminder of Song-Do. We climbed the city wall, and saw the great bronze bell and it was really beautiful. I believe it originally came from Burmah—it has Burmese writing on it, with Buddha, and Chinese inscriptions upon it. It is about eight feet high. We left again after tiffin, and passed through a rice country—paddy fields under the most wonderful state of irrigation—crossed a river at dusk, and passed through another gate into a city nestling in between two hills. Slept in a vile little inn, one of the worst on the road. In the middle of the night we were awakened by a terrible noise of coolies running in and demanding food. It turned out they were the magistrate's men, who had been pursuing a criminal, and had caught him; his crime was that he had buried his father in the wrong place. He would have to suffer a punishment, and also to disinter his father's remains.

“*October 30th.*—Our last day in chairs, and I'm not sorry. I long for a bath and change of clothes. We have journeyed 740 li (three li make a mile) and our chair-coolies are as fresh as ever. They have worn out about two pairs of shoes a day, but as the shoes are only of straw they are not very costly. At last, and about four o'clock p.m., we passed through the gates of Seoul along the main street to Mr. Chalmer's house, where we are to stay. Mrs. Chalmers met us at the door, and I felt a haven of refuge had been reached. She said 'will you have tea or a bath first, I've got hot water all ready for you, and fires in your bathroom.' Needless to say we chose the bath first. We had really had very good weather all along, only one wet day when travelling, and although it was late in the year the days were sunny and mild, though the early mornings were keen and raw, but it was an experience I do not wish to repeat, for Corean inns are filthier than it is possible to conceive. We spent a few days in Seoul amongst our friends, and left them on the third of November, the day before the Emperor of Japan's birthday. We had the loan of the Customs launch at Chemulpo. It was blowing quite a gale but we managed to reach the *Tairen Maru*, in safety

without being sea-sick. There was no first-class cabin available, so we had to content ourselves with a second-class. It was quite as nice, but right in the bows, and we had a lot of Chinese and Japanese fellow-passengers who never ceased talking night and day.

*“November 5th.*—Arrived Chefoo early in the morning, walked about the town and did a little shopping, but failed to find out anything about the Siberian route.

*“November 6th.*—Arrived at Port Arthur, a desolate spot with not a single tree to be seen.

“Little did we realize how a few months hence, this place was to be the sepulchre of countless thousands of the bravest of the brave. What a tragedy hung over its future, and yet we had some of the forebodings of the coming storm, though how great it would be we did not realize.

“The town lies close to the shore, and behind are grey hills fortified, instead of trees; cannon bristle, and the town swarms with Russian officers, every droski seems to carry them, and their uniforms are most imposing, emerald green, magenta, and red facings, and long grey overcoats—squad of soldiers perambulate the streets. The Russians fear the Japanese and every day fresh troops pour into the place. We visited the shops, Russo-Chinese bank, post office and telegraph office. A German gentleman took us to the station to find out about the trains and we find we have to change at Harbin, Manchuria, and Irkutsk. We must start at 7.30 a.m. to-morrow morning. Thirteen days to Moscow—it is appalling!

*“November 7th.*—Got up at 5 a.m. and by 6 a.m. were ready for the station. Mons. Vabrinisky, a friend, turned up, and finally followed by a train of coolies we walked to the station.”

Here I will insert one little episode which my wife has omitted to note about our departure from the station in the early morning, about the hour of 7 a.m. As we drove up in a droski the whole street in front of us was lined with a long row of tables covered with white table-cloths on which were light refreshments, and crowded from one end to the other with champagne bottles. Never to this day have I seen so vast a collection of this wine, forming as it were a forest of golden-necked bottles. We had hardly arrived when the sounds of martial music were followed by the General of Port Arthur and his staff, who were leaving for Petrograd, escorted by every remaining officer of its garrison. Speeches were then made, but the sounds of the popping of corks drowned their voices, and already the siege of Port Arthur might well have begun, for nothing was to be heard but the fusillade of corks going off like the firing of rifles.



“ There was one first-class carriage and only one decent second. The better of the two was labelled for ‘ ladies only,’ and conscientiously we got into the other ; but as no one in Russia pays any heed to class, always travelling in one higher than their ticket warrants, we were too scrupulous. Our carriage was very dirty, but the consoling part seemed to be that it was not crowded. There were two compartments, in one three commercial travellers and a Russian officer, and in the other ourselves and an inoffensive little Russian artisan. I wondered what we should do at night. At 9.30 a.m. we rushed to a buffet for breakfast. Such good tea in tumblers, with lemon and sugar, and delicious little butter rolls filled with minced hard boiled egg and rice. Our tiffin came later in the day, consisting of ‘ Stchee,’ or cabbage soup. We had a bit of a discussion over my refusing to partake of my bowlful. I had to explain that I could manage the soup, but not with the addition of the Chinese boy’s long black thumb nail floating in it, when he dumped it down in front of me.

“ Our carriage is awful. Either it has no springs, or they are broken ; the deafening noise, the swaying and jarring is almost more than one can bear. It is impossible to hear one’s self speak. We endure it by simply getting out at every station and walking about. It is funny to see the rush of kettles to the big Samovar at each station. Every man, woman, and child carries a kettle loose among their luggage, and they drink unlimited quantities of tea, and indeed I do too—it is so good. Our first night—the little Russian climbed up to the top berth with no ceremony or rugs. I undressed underneath, with a shawl hung up between the two seats. Although the awful jarring was no better we managed to sleep. In the early morning T. got some water in our tin basin, and we had a sort of cat-lick.

“ *November 8th.*—Passed in the same way as yesterday. ‘ Stchee’ at every station—but also the stations got worse and worse, and we don’t seem to fancy a yard of these raw sausages, and queer dishes we don’t know. Stchee seems good and sustaining. We go through the same unvarying country, as the crops are all in, the houses and the ground are of the same mud-colour, and now and then a tributary of the Amur breaks the brown with a ribbon of blue, but that is rare. They say the Russians are going to evacuate Manchuria. Well, all I can say by observation is, they don’t mean to do anything of the sort. They are building solid stone houses all along the line, and the Cossacks swarm at every station. 25,000 troops are guarding the line of railway. Very warm they must be, and most picturesque they look, with their sand-coloured sheepskin

coats, the skin outside and embroidered with different colours down the front. Some of the officers wear black skin coats lined with wool, like the Swedes. We follow our friends the Commercial Travellers when they get out to look for food. Our carriage was tiring us dreadfully. What was our consternation last night when on returning from a buffet we found our compartment occupied by two Russian women, a baby and a man. We found out they would leave us at 12 o'clock the same night, so we had to endure them till then. When they reached their station I must say we hurried them out. T. seized the blanket bag, hung up our shawl, unpacked our night clothes, and we made our beds. We hadn't been in bed more than five minutes when an official appeared and told us that our carriage was broken, the springs had given way, and we must turn out. I think we were up and dressed and had everything packed up in less than ten minutes, not knowing what was going to happen. We need not have been in such a rush, for it was more than an hour before the official returned and told us that we should have to go into another carriage. We were shunted backwards and forwards for another hour in the most exasperating way. Finally we were told to go to another carriage, and a stampede ensued. T. stayed by the stuff, I rushed across the line for a place and finally found myself in a third class soldiers' transport. Its two merits were that the springs were good and it was new and smelt of varnish ; but oh ! it was hard !

*“ November 9th.*—We have managed to get a plate of 'stchee' and a glass of tea. We have now been two days and a half in the train, and are arriving at Harbin. We have been dreading change of carriages, but nothing can beat last night's experience.

*“ November 10th.*—Yesterday at twelve we reached Harbin. It is to be, they say, the Chicago of the East, and certainly there seems a great amount of bustle and rush. Our commercial friends abandoned us, after explaining our need of tickets to Manchuria to a Russian porter. I stopped in the waiting room while T. went off for them. It certainly must be cold in winter for there were four huge stoves reaching up to the ceiling in the place and everyone had on furs of one sort or another. We had our tiffin and carried off a couple of loaves for emergencies. There was the usual rush for seats, after all only transport cars for soldiers, with an attempt made to pad the two lower berths. We secured one with difficulty, and managed to keep our compartment free of others, but alas ! just before we started the little seat opposite was taken by a man dying of tuberculosis of the throat with the most awful cough. The train was crowded and no other vacant seats, and there was

nothing to do but to bear it. We hung up a shawl to shut out the sight, if not the voice, and but for him, poor wretch, we should have been rather comfortable. We had a tiny table at the window, our baggage on the top berths, our kettle and tea things handy, and our loaf, which we were very glad of, as we stopped nowhere to get any dinner.

“ *November 11th.*—I have made friends with a little Russian lady travelling with her fiancé. She tells me where there is a buffet, and looks after us in it. To-night the train, which has hitherto stopped at all stations over an hour, took it into its head to start, in half-an-hour, at the station of the buffet, so we had a rush, and could hardly eat our very tough steak quickly enough.

“ *November 12th.*—Another racket of noise and cough, but to-day the train simply shunted us up and down for hours, disengaging carriages. We also climbed a mountain, where later on there is to be a tunnel, the slopes were covered with firs, while here and there were log-cabins and horses trailing great timbers across the snow. The train zig-zagged up, then curled down in circles—a most curious sensation. The engines are immense, and we had two. There was no buffet, and I don't know whether to be glad or sorry, for when there is one there is such a rush and scramble for inferior food, and when there isn't we get so hungry, and it is so necessary to eat a good deal—for the journey takes a lot out of one. Many of the Russian officers are a noisy, impolite lot, and eat in a very horrid way; there is not a bit of refinement about them.

“ *November 13th.*—Yesterday at noon we reached the town of Manchuria on the boundary line, and consequently our baggage had to go through the Custom House. Manchuria is indeed a desolate spot, a dreary windswept waste, with a cluster of mud-huts, log-cabins, and two or three little stores, made of wood, on the outskirts. A wooden waiting-room of the most primitive construction. Tired and dirty as we were, there was nowhere to wash our hands, and we loitered in and out of the waiting-room all day. But it was bitterly cold, every woman had a shawl over her head instead of a hat, and although we despise goloshes at home, yet all the officers wear them. T. and the Chief of the Customs fraternized, and I saw them clink glasses of vodka together once or twice. He had spent ten years in London, and loved it, and so, we being English, he wanted to help us in every way. He told us that something seemed to be in the air, for 45,000 troops had passed through there within the last fortnight. They are continually catching Japanese spies all over the country. He told us, too, that in our train there were twenty-eight young officers all in their twenties, and all out of their

minds ; a doctor and keepers were taking them to Russia, and they hoped some would eventually recover. The conditions of life are out here so awful, the loneliness so intense, and the food so bad, that the nervous strain is too great for many of them. He was most kind in allowing us to occupy our compartment four hours before the train started ; and then indeed we found ourselves in luxury. A four-berthed cabin with beds, with delicious springs, clean white sheets, looking glasses in the doors, electric light, a corridor, and a man servant, and a lovely lavatory—all we could desire, even to hot water to wash in. Then, at the end of the train was a buffet car and we sat at a tiny table with a spotless cloth and gave orders. A kind little Russian helped us to say what we wanted, and ordered eggs, T.'s was stale, but that was a trifle. There was even a piano in the saloon, and sconces on the walls. And now we are in Siberia. No more Cossack troops guarding the line.

“ *November 14th.*—We are passing through pine-woods and over snow, it is very picturesque, the day is bright and sunny. Tomorrow we cross Lake Baikal. They are cutting sleepers among the pines and there are tremendous stacks of them all along the line. The horses are harnessed to sleighs with the great arch over their necks, so truly Russian. 12 noon—a train has just passed us filled with convicts ; their windows were strongly barred and the faces that looked through them were villainous indeed, a terrible lot. No wonder they say that the presence of convicts in these out-of-the-way places deteriorates the peasantry and produces a bad influence on them.

“ *November 15th.*—Going through magnificent scenery. The old Scotchmen are seen flourishing well amid the snows, climbing up to the very summit of the hills. Just now we have passed over a swift river, called Selenga, flowing into Lake Baikal. We are not very far now from that lake. Shall cross to-night and there is a full moon. It is forty-five degrees below zero—as cold, as cold—everyone enveloped from head to foot in furs.”

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### IRKUTSK TO LONDON.

“ *November 16th.*—Irkutsk—Hotel Metropole. Last night we reached the shores of Lake Baikal—the Holy Sea, as the Russians call it. I must say I dreaded ‘ its stormy and unfriendly waters ’ ; so deep is it that it has not yet been fathomed, and being volcanic it is subject to sudden violent storms. Last night, however, its waves were quietly rippling over the stones to my contentment. Our train ran on to the pier. It took a great deal of talking, unintelligible to us, except the gesticulations, to get us to understand the methods of the railway company ; but at last after waiting some time a porter came and carried off our luggage and we followed like sheep. The steamer was called *Baikal*, and on her we encountered some of our fellow passengers who had left us at Manchuria and gone on by an earlier train. The lake was as calm as a mill-pond, but if nature took her repose under a full moon, human passions were not in accord, for a deafening noise of shouting, fighting, scrambling, and struggling commenced on deck in the saloon, and we began to be really alarmed. It was in the ladies’ cabin with two other women, just at the foot of the companion way. Presently our door was burst open and a man evidently drunk, struggling in the embrace of another, fell in. He was dragged out again quickly and T. appearing said ‘ stay inside and bolt your door, I will be outside,’ which we did of course. There were, I believe, three men very drunk, and they managed to bind up two, while the third quieted down for the time on the sofa outside our cabin. After he left, however, he roused up and began pacing up and down. Finally it ended in shooting a sailor in two places, arm and temple. We did not see the end, for our five days’ journey coming to an end, we again got into the train on the opposite shore of the lake for a short journey to Irkutsk.

“ Arriving at the hotel this morning we found it is the most difficult thing to make oneself understood where the people, the habits, and the language are so totally different ; but it is an experience we are rather accustomed to—so by signs and smiles we got all we wanted, rooms, hot water, towels, etc., and we were soon feeling much more clean and comfortable. Our passports were taken off to the police station, and we set out to search for the dining-room.

All along the passages are little oven-like doors through which fuel is constantly being replenished, they belong to huge stoves one to each room, and the whole place is thus beautifully warmed. We went through many passages down stairs, round corners, along corridors, and finally emerged in a bizarre apartment with hangings of green, blue, and gold satin. It was about nine o'clock, everyone seemed sleepy, the daily supplies of milk and rolls were being sorted out—one untidy waiter roamed about the room, and finally brought up at our table. He gave us a book with French translations of Russian dishes. We made our choice but he shook his head. 'Niet' (no) to everything we had selected. We then asked him what he had got, and shook our head over his suggestion of raw ham. It ended in our having only bread, butter, and tea. After this simple meal we took a sleigh-ride all round the town. It is a huge place with big buildings and many interesting things; but being the hour of church we saw no shops open, and it was as quiet as an English town is on a Sunday, everyone in furs of course. Every woman in a long fur-lined cloak, but what amused me was the quantity of plush that was worn. I've seen enough on people's backs this one week in Russia to cover hundreds of photographic albums—royal blue plush dresses (think of it!) trailing on the ground. After our drive we had tiffin, a gramophone giving out some popular music while we ate at one of the different little tables; the room was full, and evidently a great many people from the town came in just to pass the time. Afterwards we took a walk down the principal street. What struck us as peculiar was that despite the intense cold there were seats all down the street, and all the world and his wife calmly sitting on them and enjoying the air; this with the thermometer twenty degrees below zero.

" *November 17th.*—Woke up early and we were off to the station arriving at quarter past seven; we took our seats in the train, our tickets having been taken for us by the Commissionaire at the hotel; just two seats, rather a squash, with all our luggage; but we stowed it away and settled down for the next eight days. We have a Belgian next door to us, a nice little man, and disposed to be very friendly.

" *November 18th.*—Thirty-two degrees below zero and our hot-water-pipes are frozen, by constant application of red hot poker we hope to thaw them soon. The Belgian has just shown us some lovely opals he bought in Irkutsk for fifteen roubles. It is exceptionally cold, I think, for everyone is talking about it. We do not feel it at all in our carriage, but only when we pass along the train to the buffet-car. Snow lies thick on the ground, and quantities

of silver birches and larch trees make the landscape lovely, they are so delicate and graceful. We passed through a dense pine forest this morning, and monsieur told us it was full of bears, this is his fourth journey through Siberia, so he ought to know. He scoffs at the fables of our youth where wolves attack sleighs and kill passengers, he says they never attack.

*“ November 19th.*—Snow is lying thick on the ground and is still falling. Our train was three hours late at Chernore-Chenskaya this morning, it was there that we passed the postal express from Moscow, which was thirty-six hours late. The Belgian thinks we shall probably be a day or two late in Moscow. Last night we had sturgeon and partridge for dinner. But it is terribly cold. We are experiencing a Siberian winter in all its intensity, and one realizes a little what an awful punishment it must have been to have been exiled to Siberia and to tramp through such snow and ice. I should like to have seen a pack of wolves, but there is no chance so near the railway. Just now an official has been through the train with a scented deodorizer, squeezing the spray into every carriage, it was very refreshing and nice. This is our third day in this train, they seem very long.

*“ November 20th.*—Reached the Obi. The beginning of the Mid-Siberian railway. It was about 9.30, here we were told that there were all sorts of little odd stone curios to buy, so we hastily cloaked and tore out, there was only one little shop and not much to buy, it being winter, but we bought a little malachite box and some little Ural vases.

*“ November 21st.*—Fifteenth day in the train. We have come to an end of our supply of books. Mons. Closson, the Belgian, has lent us some French novels. We are now in the Barbary Steppes, all flat country. Have had tiffin—ptarmigan, partridge, and caviare. This afternoon we saw a caravanseraï of oxen and camels toiling along under loads of hay. One associates camels with sand and heat, so that it is odd to see them in thick shaggy coats drawing sleighs over the snow. At 2 p.m. we reached Petropavlovsk a big town, but an uninteresting station; we got out and walked about a bit, and bought some cedar nuts. Our train is filling up with passengers.

*“ November 22nd.*—We got up at six this morning, for our cabin was so hot it was almost unbearable; we, too, expected to reach Tchiliabinsk about eight. So having dressed and encountered Mons. Closson outside we waited for Tchiliabinsk, and the opening of our buffet; both were late, but Tchiliabinsk came first. We dressed and tore out to the one little shop, we got one or two Ural

emeralds and a few little things ; but this is not a propitious season for shop-keepers, and therefore most of the little shops were shut up for the winter. It is now about 12 o'clock, and we are climbing the Urals. They are lovely, a long low range of hills covered with fir trees. We have just turned an immense curve and shall later on be dashing down the other side. It will, however, take us some time to reach the summit. The train seems tired already and is going slowly and cautiously up. We have just passed a column, with 'Asia' on one side of it and 'Europe' on the other, on the boundary line, so we are once more in Europe after three years' absence.

" *November 23rd.*—Our last day in this train. We shall get into Moscow at 10 p.m. to-morrow. It is very flat and uninteresting to-day. Siberia is grander than Russia, such a change too from the Urals. No adventure to record, except that the buffet seems running short of provisions ; but there is always plenty of caviare, which is most nourishing, the roe of the sturgeon.

" *November 24th.*—It was 12 mid-night when we finally reached Moscow and drove to the Slaviansky Hotel. Our omnibus deposited us at its big entrance in the principal street. We found only two rooms disengaged, and took the one on the first floor. Late as it was the buffet was still open, and as we had failed to get dinner in the train owing to the dearth of provisions, we felt hungry and ordered bouillon and cold meat with tea. As we were anxious to push home, we made up our minds to spend only one day in Moscow ; we got a good guide in the morning to show us all he could and he did well. We went first to the Kremlin, which is in reality a huge fortress built on a hill in the middle of the town. It still retains part of its old Chinese wall. There is so much to see that one only had a scramble round.

" We went first to the Church of the Kremlin, where the Czar was crowned. It is the richest church in the world, and the amount of precious stones in the Ikons (sacred pictures) was prodigious. There is the Kazanski Ikon of the Virgin and Child. She has on a crown made entirely of diamonds, and all her golden robe shimmers with them. All round the chapel were the massive silver tombs of the former patriarchs. The whole of the walls were covered with gold and silver Ikons in massive silver-gilt frames. Banners made of gold and set with precious stones adorned the pillars and were the gifts of devotees. A service was going on, a priest reciting the morning prayers with long wavy brown hair, clad in a long grey robe with a massive silver chain around his neck and with the most magnificent bass voice. Amid all this display of



gold and jewels and wealth stood the worshippers ; I noticed mostly peasant women and men crossing and prostrating themselves before the altar. The Church was only lighted with wax candles and was very dim. We saw the great bell weighing very many tons, which is stated by M. Kovaleuski to have been cast in the reign of the Grand Duke Boris Godunoff, and then the superb monument to Alexander, the late Czar's father, a colossal figure in royal robes on a red-granite pedestal with a flight of granite steps up to it ; all round it was a colonnade with seats in it, whence to view Moscow lying below ; and the roof was composed of mosaic with medallion portraits of all the Czars, with Arabesque designs around it. It must have cost very many thousands of pounds.

“ We then entered the new palace which took forty years to build, and was finished in 1850. It has been inhabited five days in one hundred years, that is at the coronation of the Czars. The late Czar slept in it one night. As the guide said truly everything grand, costly, and magnificent in the world was represented in this place on a grand scale. It baffles description, even some of the door handles were of great spheres of Chrysoprase, every rich material, every costly wood, every choice marble, were concentrated here in matchless design. The architect was forced to retire to a monastery when it was finished so that there might be no copy, he was a genius. Some of the doors were inlaid with gold and silver, others were of massive brass open-work. The three state rooms opened out of each other, presenting a vista of magnificence dazzling to behold. The state bedroom was on the same scale ; but our attention was drawn to the bathroom, a little dark cabinet lined with white silk, and a small white marble bath with no accessories, quite ordinary ; the curious part about it was that the door took to pieces like a puzzle. We went into the great banqueting hall where the State Banquets are held, the canopy was still there with the three thrones, the third for the queen mother, and then the guide gave us an account of a queer custom throwing a side-light on Russian life. Up at the top of the wall on one side was a small arched window ; this was the window to what was called the ‘ Secret Room.’ There is an old custom that at the coronation of a Czar, certain ladies of royal blood are allowed to choose a husband from among the Grand Dukes for themselves, and those who have passed *la jeunesse dorée* and are still unmarried often do so. The unmarried Grand Dukes are seated at the Banquet at a table in full view of the window. Here sit the ladies with a dark curtain behind them and unknown to the diners make their choice. Afterwards they go to the Czar and ask for such a

one in marriage and he grants the request. Three ladies made their choice at the last Coronation.

“ The Palace was full of costly treasures and marvellous needle-work. We noted a whole carpet in a vast room composed of all the different coloured cloths worn by the different regiments worked in appliqué in one great arabesque design. I recognized the emerald green, magenta and orange of the facings that I had seen at Port Arthur. We then passed into the old Palace, and saw the quaint and tiny, but lovely room where Peter the Great was born ; also where Napoleon slept the night he was in Moscow. The bed was draped with old Chinese embroidery in that peculiar and well-known Eastern shade of red satin.

“ From there we walked to the Church of St. Saviour. Another costly display of wealth. There are sixteen hundred churches in Moscow, and this gem has a roof composed of five golden cupolas. The frescoes around it were by the great Russian painter Vereshchagin. They are lovely, and the one that struck us most was an exquisite rendering of the Holy Family—St. Anna, with the Child upon her knee swathing Him in white linen, the Virgin lying on a couch gazing at Him, and St. Joseph standing behind in a devout attitude ; but my description of it gives no idea of the beauty of the faces, nor of the soft colouring and light of the whole. T. was allowed to go into the Holy Place, to see the silver altar, but I, as a woman, could not enter, so peeped from a corner. There were banners there with a wealth of diamonds, and a great dome copied from St. Peter’s at Rome, the whole in such exquisite proportion that the eye was satisfied wherever it rested.

“ From there we walked about and did a little shopping. Everything is lovely, the Russian enamel, the papier-maché, the red enamel, the silver work, but nothing is cheap. After that we returned to the hotel, gathered up our belongings, and set off for the station.

“ *November 25th.*—We are on our way to Warsaw now. We have a big compartment all to ourselves, but shall be turned out to-night to go through the Customs. We reach Berlin the day after tomorrow. The country is very much the same as in Siberia, but less snow. 7 p.m., just had dinner, not a bad one, ‘ Stchee,’ mince in a cabbage leaf, roast duck and a compôte of fruit,—I forgot when writing about the New Palace at Moscow, to say that among the tips it is necessary to give one of fifty kopecks to an old Crimean officer with a breast full of medals. He interested me, for he and my father had fought against each other, but it seemed sad that the pay should be so small, that an old veteran had to augment it by receiving tips for uncovering the furniture for us to see.

*“ November 27th.*—Nearly reached Berlin ; such a busy night we passed. We arrived at Warsaw at 10 p.m. got into a local train and went round the town to another station in a poky little carriage,—out of that into another, where we were for hours. Arriving at Alexandrovo at four o'clock in the morning, turned out into a buffet and got a cup of tea, and a bun as hard as a brickbat and as old as the hills which cost 2½d. Then into a German train—such a luxurious carriage—red velvet or felt, draught screen over the window, good springs and any amount of cushions. We had not occupied it more than half an hour, when the door was flung open and a most awe-inspiring soldier, with the Royal Eagle on his helmet, stepped in and asked for our passport. A little later another official came in to clip our tickets. Later still the Custom House officer and attendants to look at our luggage. Then another soldier to return our passports, and then again another official popped in to take a cursory glance at our tickets. We had very little sleep that night. Shall arrive at Berlin to-day, at 11 30 a.m.

*“ November 28th.*—We arrived at Berlin and went straight off to the Central Hotel. Found no letters as we had hoped, owing to my letter giving the names of hotels having, as I ultimately found out, been lost, so we then decided to hasten on. Took a walk in the Unter den Linden, and had the good luck to see the Kaiser drive along in a Victoria. Later in the afternoon had a drive and saw the Kaiserin drive by in a brougham. We left Berlin at 10 o'clock at night, and the next morning changed at Cologne. Took a walk there and saw the Cathedral. Sat down under its arching roof and felt a little rested. Shall reach Paris to-morrow.

*“ From Paris we took the early morning train and arrived home. Not so very tired considering that we had been twenty-four days in the train, with only three breaks of a night each, one in Irkutsk, one in Moscow, and one in Paris. It was a new and strange experience and I liked it, but would not care to repeat it unless we could travel in the ' wagon-lits ' straight through. It is much less expensive than the sea route from the East, and far more varied. Altogether despite some hardships, it really was rather pleasant on the whole.”*

In the diary my wife gives an account of a curious experience we had when crossing Lake Baikal, but as she was in her cabin she did not realize to the full extent what she relates therein, so I will expatiate in a little more detail upon what was a mystery to me and will always remain so. During our journey from Manchuria to the Lake a Russian Colonel occupied a seat in our compartment, and was both civil and polite to us. He struck us as being a quiet,

inoffensive individual, immersed in novels most of the way, but, on going on board our steamer when we went down to the cabin allotted to us by our ticket, we found our friend the Colonel already in possession of it. On pointing out that the number of the cabin corresponded to the one on our ticket, he made no reply but began to take off his accoutrements together with a revolver, and proceeded to take off his tunic. I said to my wife "you had better go across to a cabin where I saw your two nice looking Russian ladies enter and see if you can get a berth there." So she went over to them; both of them spoke French and welcomed her.

Going back to my cabin I found that the Colonel was lying in one bunk and I took possession of the other. Soon after the bell had sounded and we had cleared the wharf there came the sound of men's loud voices on deck, as if a general stampede were going on. The Colonel, hearing this, hastily arose, dressed and went up the staircase, I following at a little distance. On gaining the deck I found what appeared to be a regular football scrimmage going on, in which both the ship's crew and passengers were taking part. When all was quiet I returned to my cabin; I went up again and in the upper deck saloon I found three, tall, peasant-looking men laid out on the floor, with their legs bound together and arms bound to their sides by pieces of spun yarn, while sitting round them were a number of Russians drinking.

Once more I returned to my cabin and again a scrimmage commenced; this time the whole crowd came tumbling down the forward staircase leading to our lower deck, the balustrade of which was carried away. Pushing and shoving they passed along an alley-way; then, by the help of two Russian fellow-passengers, I pulled to a very heavy iron door and bolted it to prevent their return. As this was happening one or two men fell against the door of the cabin that my wife was in, and burst it open. Again we heard the crowd on deck, and silence once more ensued.

We were by this time just berthing alongside the wharf on the western side of the Lake. On going to fetch my wife she told me the elder Russian lady was very frightened and would not come out and had only kept on repeating the words "C'est très terrible." Having escorted my wife to the train, at her own special request I went back to offer my services to the Russian lady. The lower deck was just level with the top of the wharf, and as I stepped off the latter and was crossing the saloon I saw on my right our friend the Colonel raise his revolver and fire twice right across me at a young petty officer on my left. I did not wait but rushed across into the lady's cabin and found her prostrate; seizing her arm and taking

a firm grip of it under mine, and with my other hand holding her bag, I pulled her out.

As I re-crossed the saloon there, standing supported by two men, was the petty officer with blood oozing out from a hole in his forehead. I safely deposited my little Russian lady in the train where she went off into a kind of swoon, in which she remained until we had almost reached Irkutsk station.

Here we lost sight of her, and as we could find no one who spoke other than his own native tongue on the train the mystery of this extraordinary episode remained unsolved. The little Russian lady had previously told my wife that she had twice made the journey across Siberia, and was then returning to Russia after having paid a visit to her son at Port Arthur, where he was the engineer in charge. When the row began all my wife could get out of her was "C'est très terrible." Whatever the cause the lady was very upset. Since this happened I have thrice, on separate occasions, passed through Irkutsk, and endeavoured unsuccessfully to solve the mystery of that voyage.

We had intended to spend a few days in Paris to recuperate from our long journey before returning home, but the night of our arrival there brought us our letters telling us that our son had met with another accident and was seriously ill. So early next day we resumed our journey and arrived home after three years' absence.

Some sixteen years have since passed, but the impressions of those years all remain fixed vividly in my mind. The early part of 1903 saw me setting up for myself as a Consulting Mining Engineer; several of my old employers having promised me their work my start was an easy one. Many have been the visits I have since made on inspection, reporting and organizing new enterprises over a very wide area of the world's surface; a good deal of my work has been especially identified with Russia, Central Siberia, Turkestan, and the far Eastern Russian or "Primorski" provinces, reaching from the Korean boundary to beyond the Amur River; apart from the many thousands of miles of travelling by railway, this has involved several thousands of miles in journeys made away from the main railway lines, and some hundreds of miles of steamboat voyages along the rivers and coast.

In this way I have had exceptional opportunities of witnessing Russian life under almost every conceivable condition and circumstance, more especially life as met with in the country rather than in the cities, though I have visited many of the more important of these. Some of my confrères have had even better opportunities than myself of studying Russian life, and I wish that one or two of them

especially would give us their experiences. Later on I will relate some of my own experiences in Russia, and I hope to be able to return some of the many kindnesses I have received from all classes of Russians (notably some of the poorest of them) by bringing to my readers' notice the kindly, good-hearted disposition of these people. They are rather like the Irish in character—in that they are sympathetic and good-natured, but dangerously given to fierce outbursts of anger if stirred up by grievances, or supposed-grievances. In spite of all we hear now of the Bolshevik cruelties let us make no mistake by confusing the Bolsheviks with the mass of the Russian people, for they represent only the worst scum of the nation.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### ACROSS AMERICA TO JAPAN.

My first year at home was irksome as my habits of life had to be changed from those of a free and independent life to those of a city-man, going to and fro his office every day ; but, as in everything else, force of habit will accustom a man to go through with anything (however unpleasant it may be) and so it has been with myself.

At the end of a year, war between Japan and Russia having broken out, it became necessary for me to go back to the old mine in Corea as we thought we might have to close it down and withdraw our staff. So it was agreed that I should go out via San Francisco, and on my way make an inspection of certain mines in Montana, U.S.A.

Viscount Hyashi, the Japanese Minister in London, provided me with letters including a personal one to the Japanese Minister in Seoul (also of the same name, Hyashi, but no relation) in which he vouched for my standing and asked him to give me every aid and all assistance to help the interests of my firm in their connection with the mine. Provided with this letter it was felt that no obstacles would be put in my way in proceeding to the mine.

Arriving in New York I took my ticket via Montana—that is, over the Northern Pacific railway—for San Francisco, but as I did not want to carry my heavier baggage with me I “expressed” it straight through to that city without any extra charge, there to await my arrival. The “express” system of booking and delivering baggage in the States is one which we well might adopt in this country ; the convenience of having one’s baggage checked to any distant part with no further trouble about it, and the certainty that it will be sent by the quickest and shortest route is an inestimable boon to the traveller. For short distances our system is probably better for the energetic business man, but for the average travelling public who only occasionally make a journey the “express” system constitutes a great convenience.

My journey took me again by way of Niagara, and I did not fail to take advantage of a short visit to view that scene of magnificent splendour. Each visit I have paid to these Falls, instead of making them appear common-place, has increased by a hundredfold the effect on my mind of how stupendously great,—far surpassing

thought—are the forces of nature ; though so visibly depicted to the eye this scene is but a small picture, to the scientifically-trained mind, of what is going on in the unseen and invisible world around us. Nature here is noisy ; the volume of sound and the sight of rushing torrents of waters as seen and heard in these Falls are an exception to the general rule, where the forces of nature are equally as great or rather incomparably greater, and are working silently and invisibly, even in the very dust we tread upon. As I turned away from the Falls once again I wondered what was the effect on the mind of the average sight-seer who visits them.

A run through Chicago had brought vast changes since I was last there, and still more since my first visit. The city had grown immensely since those days, but what struck me principally was that the architectural designs of her buildings had expanded at an even greater rate, from the huge blocks of ugly buildings (the gauge of which the average Chicago citizen then reckoned as " elegant ") to those of her more modern ones, conveying a sense of refinement and even grandeur.

Travelling northwards I could scarcely recognize whole stretches of country that had in the old days been nothing but prairies ; now they were covered with homesteads almost of the " New England style " and farms both small and great nestled amidst a luxuriant growth of trees. These same stretches now have all the appearance of a wooded country, much unlike their former monotonous aspect.

Arriving at Butte I stayed here two days to transact certain business matters before proceeding to the mines. Butte is the centre of a great copper-mining industry of which it forms the business centre, and in itself is a typical, uninteresting, mining town. The only place of attraction, situated on a hill a short way out of town and connected by tramway, is a large restaurant, and in the grounds surrounding it all kinds of " dime shows " were being carried on, or what we should call penny peep shows. A good band was playing at the time of my visit and was really the only attractive feature about it ; but situated as it is on the top of a hill above the smoke of the town, whence a grand view of the country round is obtained, it is a great boon to the people of the town, who flock out there by hundreds. Even at the time of my visit the town was a fairly rowdy one—robberies in the streets being not uncommon, and I think I saw more drunken men here than in any other town or place I was ever in in the States, which perhaps may be accounted for by the large number of English and Irish miners employed here in the mines !



Leaving again for the Elk Horn mountains I got out at a little roadside station, and was driven out in a buggy to the mines, alluvial ones, about eight miles distant. As I drove along I seemed to be quite familiar with the country around and then it flashed on me that long years ago, in the early eighties, when I entered Montana on our trek from Calgary to Helena, I had crossed the railway here, and it was here, too, where the two lines advancing from the East and West had met and been linked up by the driving in of a golden spike; up to then I had been quite under the impression I was nowhere near our old line of march. It was near here under the Little Horn that General Custer and his small army were wiped out by the Sioux Indians—to the U.S.A. this was a disaster similar to that of Isandlwana in the Zulu war to the British army, and an episode of Indian warfare that is known in every American household.

These mines are well worth a visit from anyone unfamiliar with hydraulic mines, who is in their vicinity. It is a very pretty sight to see the little, narrow jets of water issuing from their goose-necked "giants" playing on a high gravel cliff; imagine a jet of water from a fire hose (but issuing at a much higher velocity), looking in the sunlight like a silver thread as it passes through the air until it impinges on the face of a gravel-cliff; as it does so it pounds against it with such terrific force that the gravel flies in every direction.

In this way a high bank of cliff of gravel is undercut, and the upper portions then come tumbling down by their own weight with a mighty crash; the jets then play on the débris and wash it down into a long line of sluice-boxes in which the gold is caught chiefly near its head, and is cleaned up though only every now and again—it may be after a couple of months or after a whole season's run. The large boulders found in the gravel are lifted by great steam, or electrically-driven cranes, and are dumped into cars standing on a side track; these cars, as they are filled, are then trammed away to be emptied of their contents which is dumped down the mountain side. But all this is not quite so simple as it seems, for it entails a careful survey of the ground with all its contours, the bringing in of the water (often by many miles of strong, steel piping, or of wooden fluming) and the laying out of the grade for the sluice-boxes to the best advantage, and above all the seeing to it that at the end of the sluice-boxes there is ample fall for the carrying away and disposal of the tailings, that is the gravel after it has been robbed of its gold. Many of these hydraulic enterprises involve the outlay of an uncommon amount.

Situated as these mines were on the flanks of the Elk Horn range in their ravines or gulches, the scenery was picturesque though wild. Here the air was bracing while the sun shone resplendently ; during my stay the weather, though still cold, could not have been better ; but the lights on the hills were something peculiar to these parts, and though I cannot describe them, yet I can recall them to mind almost as vividly as if I were again on the flanks of those hills.

Our camp was typical of a Western Miner's—a few log-cabins built under the shade of some tall, straight pines, the men's quarters consisting of a number of rooms fitted up with bunks around them. The large dining room with its long deal table and forms on either side served for both the staff and the men, the former sitting at the head of the table ; but what a change had taken place since my early days in these camps ! Instead of a few plain dishes with a service of tin plates and tin mugs, there was a menu fit for a palace on a service of china that would have passed decent muster in Belgravia. As an example : for breakfast, porridge, milk, cream and sugar, fried bacon and eggs or an Irish stew, hot cakes of all descriptions, waffles served with syrup, a variety of preserves according to choice, and, lastly, stewed peaches or pears. Both dinner and supper were on a par.

As in most of these camps, the chef was a Chinaman, " John," who was up every day of his life at 3.30 a.m. and only finished cleaning up at about 9.30 to 10 p.m. " John " was a native of Swatow, and when I told him I knew his native town, and had been there more than once, the poor, wrinkled, old Chinaman expressed his pleasure in such a volume of pidgeon English that some of the men expressed themselves by saying that " John " had broken out from his natural reserve and was showing up in a new light, and that they had not guessed it was in him.

I was loath to come away from our camp and surroundings, for not only were they intensely interesting professionally, but for a mining camp it was quite a fairy spot. More often than not a mining-camp is located amidst desolate surroundings. For a summer's holiday, with good sport in the mountains around, good fishing in the neighbourhood, and altitude enough to be out of the intense heat of the plains beneath, a prettier and more enchanting spot than this it would be difficult to find. It was free, too, from the plague of mosquitoes, ticks and vermin ; there were, perhaps, a few snakes but they were seldom come across ; and with the chance of getting a good head of a mountain sheep, what greater attraction could be offered ? Had it not been for my home-ties I should have wished for nothing better than to be Manager of those mines.

Subsequently, an English Manager who had spent two years here was returning home, but the evening previous to his departure he crossed to a neighbouring camp to wish them good-bye ; before leaving them a blizzard commenced to blow, his friends advised him to stay the night ; he would not, and set forth on his journey back, just over a mile ; but he was never to reach the end of it, for in the morning his body was found frozen. What had happened to him was written in the snow ; he had passed his house within twenty yards of it without seeing it, and had gone on making a wide circle until he came back on it, and becoming exhausted, had sunk down and died, probably from heart failure caused by the intense cold ; there, as described, his frozen body was discovered in the morning. This is a very different side of the picture to the one I have depicted above. Had I struck that camp in winter I think I should not have been so smitten with its enticements. In winter all mining operations other than cutting firewood and timber and transporting them to camp are shut down. As it happened this unfortunate Manager was coming home on a holiday during one of these periods of inactivity.

At the mine I met an old South African friend, who was also there on a professional visit from home ; and many a South African yarn did we exchange as we were testing and panning some of the ground together. He had made quite a large fortune in the old diamond digger's days, but the larger portion of it had slipped through his fingers. As time pressed I had to cut short what I wished could have been a longer stay.

Continuing my journey west by the Northern Pacific across the Rockies I again found myself in Seattle, grown since I was there from a small town into a city, and now become a rival to San Francisco. Going south I arrived in San Francisco in time to catch my steamer, a U. S. Pacific Mail Boat, which was leaving the next morning for Yokohama.

There were but few passengers on board, and they were all Americans, and a very lively set they proved to be. The officers on board were very mysterious about our cargo, for some of the passengers were very suspicious—believing that we were running arms across for the Japanese—and had expressed themselves openly about it. Both the Captain and officers evasively avoided either denying or admitting the truth about it. Our port of call was Honolulu—that gem of an Island lying on our route across the Pacific—and not until we had passed it did we hear from the officers that our cargo consisted chiefly of explosives and torpedoes—contraband of course. We passengers wanted to know what our share in

the transaction would be seeing that our liberty and even lives were being risked without our approval.

As we approached the island our American passengers, most of whom were making their first voyage, were in raptures over the beauties of the tropical view, as seen from our deck, and I can well imagine the surprise of those who had not seen it before and can understand why they went off into paeans of praise. The fine coco-nut trees, the banana groves, the deep blue of the surrounding seas, the luxuriance of the vegetable-life, suddenly come upon after days spent on the Pacific Ocean, took them unawares, and tended perhaps to exaggerate their first impressions. Lovely as it all looked, I could not rise to their exaltation, for Honolulu, beautiful as it is, is not to be compared with some of the Islands of the Eastern Archipelago. I will grant that once on shore the great profusion of cultivated flowers surpassed anything I had seen before. It may have been a gala day, but it was flowers here and flowers everywhere.

Not far from the landing was a modern American hotel, but some way out of town along the beach was another very fine American one where I put up. In front of it the surf was rolling in, breaking along its sandy shores in great curling rollers, and many people were to be seen swimming and being initiated into the mysteries of the native surf-board. On our way out to this beach some of us visited the Aquarium which had been recently opened. Of all the striking objects of sea life never had any of us before seen anything like this—it was a vision of colours almost undreamt of. In each of the large glass tanks fish of the most intensely vivid bright colour were swimming about—bright greens, blues, reds, yellows, even purples. For the moment we could only imagine some artist had been at work painting them with the brightest colours picked out from his palette. Until then I had no idea that beyond gold-fish such brilliantly-coloured fish existed. By the side of some of them the peacock's bright plumage would have looked dull. Several artists with brush and canvas were at work busily painting them, but not even in a painting could I recall ever having seen anything approaching their brilliancy. There were, too, so many varieties of them. We all agreed that just to visit this Aquarium and so get a peep of the wonders hidden in the blue waters of the mighty Pacific, was worth a visit from "Frisco" and back.

In one very large tank was the most uncanny looking creature that I have ever seen in the animal world, an octopus, about the size of a large ape. Hitherto my ideas and those of my companions had been that an octopus was a creature that slowly put forth its

horrid tentacles, with their innumerable little cup-fashioned suckers and felt its way along much as does a snail ; but this creature with its almost human-like eyes, prominently staring forth from its mouthless head, was running through the tank from one side to the other much as a monkey swings itself along in the branches of a tree. A more repulsive and fearful-looking being could scarcely be imagined, and it made one's blood run cold to think that such a living creature existed. The very thought of it even now fills me with loathing. To be eaten by a shark or even by an alligator would be horrible enough, but to be caught in an octopus' tentacles from which, even if it were one of the size we gazed upon, it would be impossible to escape, seemed in imagination almost stupefying. It was an instantaneous relief to turn from the sight of this hideous monster to the other tanks containing their marvellously bright-coloured denizens, swimming about, each a little picture of beauty.

I had set my mind on entering the surf and on being initiated into the art of using the South Sea Islanders' surf-board, but after seeing that monstrous-looking octopus, and being told the species was common off these shores, it took all my courage and fortitude to make myself enter the sea ! With a native instructor we entered the surf by taking a header through a roller as it was about to break, and coming up on the other side we swam out a little beyond where the rollers were coming in and again breaking seawards. The first lesson was to learn to place the short, flat, narrow board well under one's body, protruding a little beyond one's chest, and then to strike out vigorously just as a roller passed (when the effect was that of being swept forward as if on a toboggan), and then to swim back to repeat the trick. After mastering this the next lesson was, as one was being swept forward, to grasp the sides of the board with both hands and, quickly drawing up one's knees to plant one's feet in the centre of it, and at once let go of it and spring into an upright position. This I managed to do, but I could only balance myself for a second or two and then flopped over.

Our time was too short to permit of finally mastering the art of coming in balanced on the back of a roller in an upright or standing position. It is a pretty sight to see the natives accomplishing this feat, and it is one in which they are very skilful. Having been a good swimmer and diver from childhood it was easy to get as far forward as I did ; I felt I should have succeeded with another two days' practice. In the enjoyment of this delightful experience I soon forgot all about my nightmare of the possibility of being seized by an octopus.

What more immediately interested me in this island was the fact

that several hundred Koreans had been imported during the past year as labourers on the sugar-estates. This was the first time that Koreans had ever been induced to leave their native country, with the exception of a small emigration across the northern border of Korea into Russian territory, when they went as settlers and not as labourers. I was glad to hear them spoken of highly by two of the estate-owners as good workers, giving far less trouble than either the Chinese or Japanese coolies. The lazy Korean as seen in his own country (who, as I have before described, may be seen with as many as three to five working on an ordinary-sized shovel, or with five to seven on a spade or shovel, some thirty per cent. larger) is a fairly steady worker and industrious when he knows his earnings will not be taken from him ; but in his own country if he gains a few savings he knows they will be taken from him, so he has no incentive to work except to supply his bare needs. Again, the Koreans will work on daily pay whereas the Chinese won't ; or if they do they put in the minimum amount of work ; but on contract work the Chinese make excellent workers.

When the Johannesburg Commission was sent to China and Korea to study the importation of coolie-labour for the Rand, I wrote strongly, advising that Korean-labour would, if taken, prove better than Chinese, being easier for foreigners to handle and more reliable. But the Commission could not be convinced that the apparently lazy Koreans whom they saw working in their own country could possibly be converted into efficient miners. Personally, I was sorry that they lost this opportunity of going to Johannesburg where they would have had the chance of making small fortunes for themselves and of having their horizon opened ; but although at the time they were better treated and less-taxed than formerly, it is probable that the greater part of their gains would still have gone into the pockets of their officials.

The town of Honolulu, as we passed through it on our way back to our steamer and as we rambled through its streets, might have been a Japanese one ; almost every store and shop appeared to be owned by Japanese, and what few natives we came across were lost in the crowds of Japanese. We had spent a pleasant interlude on our voyage to Japan and once more we found ourselves on board our steamer.

A few days after leaving Honolulu the Captain told us that he was heading for Mid-way Island about sixty miles out of our route. This island is a small coral one, on which is a U.S. cable-station, the cable from the Philippine Islands to San Francisco being then but just completed. The object of our visit there was to find out if

Yokohama were open and the way in free. A cable in reply was received from Manila saying that the Russian Fleet, composed of the *Rurik*, *Roussia*, and *Gromboi* battleships, were off Yokohama. The Captain therefore decided to wait here three days and then bear up for Yokohama, as he thought that in the intervening time, before we could arrive off that port, the fleet would either have left or have been driven away.

We were anchored about a mile off the island, and for three days we lay there rocking to and fro in the Pacific swell that was rolling in on shore and breaking on its outer reef. As seen from the deck the island looked so desolate that only two or three passengers cared to land. We, to pass the time away, obtained from the ship's crew some fishing-tackle and were soon busy hauling up on board a quantity of fish similar to those we had seen in the Honolulu Aquarium. The Captain good-naturedly got the carpenter to knock up a fairly good-sized tank into which we threw our spoil. Not only had I now seen these wonderful fish, but had caught them, and our tank soon had in it every colour of the rainbow.

Some of the Japanese crew added to our excitement by catching a good-sized shark, which was hauled on board, by aid of the ship's steam-capstan. The shark was quickly despatched with the knives of the crew, and when they commenced cutting it up I went down below to get my camera to take a picture of this unique scene. As I had to get my trunk up from the hold I was gone about a quarter of an hour, but on my return to deck every bit of the huge fish had disappeared, and in its place numberless lines of rope were carrying strips of shark meat, put out to dry in the sun. Shark's fins are a delicacy with both the Chinese and Japanese; soup made from shark's fins compares well with turtle soup; of the two I prefer the former. I am told it takes about sixty hours' simmering to prepare.

From Mid-way Island we made direct for Yokohama. It was about 11 p.m. on a dark night when we were off that port. Steaming up to it, we espied several lights ahead of us, but they suddenly disappeared and we began to think they must be the Russian fleet lying in wait for us. As we steamed on we found ourselves in the midst of a fleet of Japanese fishing-boats the lights of which we had seen, but they, thinking we were one of the Russian ships returned, had put them out. From them we learnt that the Russian fleet had only left that very morning, and that the steamer which had left (or was due to leave) Seattle the day we sailed from San Francisco had been captured and (as we afterwards learnt) taken up to Vladivostok, where the passengers were detained several months before they were allowed their freedom.

I had a good deal of business to transact in Yokohama, so did not go on to Tokio, but our Agent sent my official letter up to the proper authorities asking for a permit for me to proceed to Corea. My original letter was retained, but in its place another was brought down and handed to me in person by an officer to present to the Military Authorities in Seoul. The Yokohama Hotel and Club were full of newspaper correspondents, but I kept my counsel to myself and did not inform them of my permit, knowing that many if not all of them had failed to get permission to enter Corea.

From Yokohama I left by steamer for Kobe where I stayed a few days awaiting a small Japanese steamer that was expected to leave for Corea. Both in Yokohama and Kobe I saw nothing to lead one to think that Japan was herself engaged in so great a war. At the latter place I learnt that a large number of soldiers had been shipped for Port Arthur during my first night ashore and sent away in the middle of the night while we all slept ; this was their usual practice, so the embarkation of troops went on secretly without exciting the townsfolk.



## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### BATTLE OF TSUSHIMA.

LEAVING Kobie we steamed down through the Inland Sea—so world-renowned for its charming scenery and so oft-described—until we arrived off Shimonoseki, off which port the authorities signalled us to anchor. When the Customs came on board we learnt that the Russian fleet was outside of the entrance to the Straits.

Here we remained several days. On the Moji side of the Straits I found large numbers of Japanese soldiers; those in old khaki uniforms were recuperating from Port Arthur, while those in new ones were reserves waiting to be sent over. No one in town knew anything of what was occurring in Port Arthur; all the returned soldiers were under strict orders to say nothing of what they had seen. A very long-trusted Japanese, who had been thirty years in the branch-office here of J. M. & Co., told me that not even to his mother or father would a soldier communicate a word. Although he was well-known himself and in close touch with Japanese shipping, and although Japanese were going to and from Port Arthur, yet he had only a shadowy idea of what was going on there.

I think the funniest thing I saw whilst staying here was the way in which a number of little shooting-galleries in the town were completely monopolized by Japanese soldiers. The targets were disappearing ones, with wild Cossacks, or some awful-looking Russian soldiers, intermittently bobbing up. The owners of these galleries were doing a big business for they were always crowded; but the strangest part about them was that those who patronized them were not men going to Port Arthur, but those back from it. Hardly ever did I see a new uniform in one of the galleries—a good example of how differently the Eastern mind works from our own, for had they been English soldiers it would have been the recruits and not the veterans who would have been found patronizing the galleries.

I am sure that some of the correspondents who were staying in Shimonoseki in hopes of getting over to Corea were not examples of the average European newspaper representatives. They were a pretty wild lot and the Japanese had not an easy job in dealing with them.

We were held up several days here, and I was beginning to wonder if the Russian fleet had permanently taken up its guard off here, when our Japanese Captain sent for me one day to come on board. Taking me into his cabin he told me he was going to trust me with the information that he intended to make a run that night for Fusan, the southern port of Corea. He believed the Russian fleet had gone north but was not sure ; all he was sure of was that they had left the mouth of the Straits. If I decided to take the risk I might stay on board, if I elected to remain behind my full passage money would be returned ; I elected to take my chance.

At 9. p.m. that night we weighed anchor and steamed out of the Straits, passing on the way an outward bound troopship with her decks crammed with soldiers (most likely making a run for Port Arthur). As we passed close alongside of them the soldiers cheered again and again with their "Bensai" cries. Not one of our crew or passengers returned their cheers—again so different from our English custom ! As an Englishman I waved my hat and cheered in British fashion, and, from innate politeness if not from reciprocal feelings, many of them waved their caps back to me. It was a pathetic sight to see these brave men so cheery and going to such desperate fighting, but now one has become accustomed to see our own lads going off in similar fashion in this still greater war—all the more pathetic.

About 3.30 to 4 a.m. I was awakened to find ourselves slowing up. On deck all was dark and nothing was to be seen when suddenly a great battleship loomed up ahead ; whether she were Japanese or Russian we did not know, nor could I find out, for the Captain was the only Japanese on board who spoke English and of course I could not then ask him. Naturally I thought she was a Russian, but later the Captain told me she was the Japanese Admiral's ship. This ship had told our Captain to make for Fusan as quickly as he could, for she was then in touch with the Russian fleet, which she with her consorts had intercepted, and it lay between us and our late port. Our captain had not seen it and thought we must have passed either very close to it or through it ; if the Russians saw us they probably allowed us to pass without molestation or firing a gun for fear of giving their own position away.

The admiral informed our Captain that at daybreak they would engage the Russians. Putting on full steam we made for the Corean Coast, and as we entered Fusan harbour we heard the distant boom of the guns, but as the wind was off shore we only heard them faintly. Soon after 7 a.m. we ceased to hear any further sound of a gun unless later in the day we heard, as we thought, the distant

sound of guns firing at stated intervals, which (we surmised) signified the burial of the dead.

In the afternoon, outside the eastern side of the harbour but partly hidden by the hills, we watched the funnel of a steamer which was very slowly making her way north. Whereupon I built a theory that the Japanese had been successful, and that this was a damaged warship of theirs making for the fine harbour of Masampo, a little higher up the coast.

For three days we were afraid to go out of Fusan lest the Russian fleet had won and might still be cruising about. The island of Tsushima, off which the battle had been fought, was in cable communication with Fusan, but nevertheless no news leaked out for three days. Then came the full report of the battle. The *Rurik* had sunk, the *Roussia* and *Gromboi*, both badly damaged, had got away steaming northwards. I learnt afterwards that this battle was the most determined and well put up sea-fight the Russians made during the war. The *Rurik* was still firing her guns as she sank; the *Roussia* and *Gromboi*, both badly damaged, took several days to get back to Vladivostok. Why was it they were not captured or sunk when in such a crippled condition? The only answer could be that the Japanese also had been badly mauled, and could not follow them up.

Whilst in port I learnt that our steamer's cargo was to be landed at Chinnampo, and that she would only call in at Chemulpo for a few hours; so I telegraphed, through the military authorities, asking that a permit might be sent to meet me at Chemulpo, permitting me to go on in her to Chinnampo, but I had only a very faint hope that I might be saved going to Seoul to report myself, when perhaps I should have to wait weeks for a boat to Chinnampo.

We steamed on slowly, coasting between the islands and along the western shores of Corea. One very dark night we were watching in the bows of the boat, when suddenly and without any warning a brilliant searchlight flashed across them, dazzling us with its brightness, and then we were left in pitchy darkness. Most likely a Japanese torpedo-boat cruising in the vicinity had seen us and flashed her light to discover our nationality.

When we arrived off Chemulpo a Japanese A.D.C. came on board; I heard my name being called, and much to my surprise I found that he had brought me a letter to the Commandant at Chinnampo which he exchanged with me for my letter from Tokio to the Seoul military authorities. As he did not speak English our Captain acted as interpreter, and after a few exchanges of courtesy he left me with permission to proceed. I had barely time to pay a visit

to one or two old friends here, and a solitary one to that little grave ; I plucked a few leaves from a tree over it and sent them home in a letter to my wife.

At Chinnampo I landed and reported myself to the Commandant ; from him I received a letter to the General in command at Pyeng-Yang. Chinnampo was a base for supplies to the army, and from being a sleepy little place when I last left it, it had now grown into one of great activity. Next morning I went on board a steamer going up the Ta-Tong to Pyeng-Yang filled with Japanese officers.

Arriving there I again presented myself before the General, who duly questioned me ; my letter was taken from me, and another was given me in case of need, to be kept until my return to Pyeng-Yang, when I was told to report myself and give back the letter. Going to the Japanese hotel I found it full of my late companions, the officers. There was not a room to be had, but most kindly they insisted on giving one up to me. Although I had found the Japanese courteous they are generally unwilling to put themselves to any personal inconvenience for a foreigner, and this extreme case of kindness seemed to me exceptional ; it may be, on the other hand, that the military caste are different, being better educated and less selfish than the bourgeois class with whom one more often comes in contact.

I received certain verbal instructions from the General and promised on my word of honour that I would say nothing either to European or Japanese about anything I might observe outside the walls of Pyeng-Yang on my journey to the mine. The Russian cavalry had previously been right up to the walls of this city, but had been driven back by the Japanese. The General had sent up one hundred soldiers for our protection at the mine, but on the ground of our being neutrals a request had been made to him that they might be withdrawn ; this was acceded to ; had the Russians entered the mine and found the soldiers stationed there their presence would have precluded us from claiming a neutral's position. The nearest point to the mine that the Russians ever reached was about twenty to twenty-five miles distant.

Early next day I left with my interpreter for our mines. On my way out of the town I paid a visit to the tomb of Kija (" Tsze " in Chinese)—one of the most venerated spots in the whole of Corea ; and near it is a very fine old Confucian Temple well worth a visit. Pyeng-Yang is very proud of this tomb of him whom they believed to have been the founder of the Kingdom of Corea in 1125 B.C.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### THIRD AND FOURTH VISITS TO COREA.

ARRIVING at the mine I received a very warm welcome from my old staff, both white and Asiatic, and it was well worth the long journey to be amongst them again. They were busy days I spent there, and my visit reminded me of the happy time we had spent here, marred by the loss of our sweet mite of a daughter. How everything reminded me of her, far more than the little grave at Chemulpo ! Again I could picture her running about, and could see her greeting those strange faces, so different from her parents,—the poor coolie, or the Corean Yangban dressed in his often sumptuous, flowing, silk-gauze robes, through which showed the pale rich colours of the under vestments, far more attractive to a child than those of the poor coolie. All were the same to her, it was humanity she greeted and not the clothes.

During my visit here there was one incident well worth relating as characteristic of the patient perseverance of the Asiatic. I had been with my interpreter to visit a distant outpost, and when returning a little after sunset we found ourselves within about four miles from the mine ; a quarter of a mile ahead of us we suddenly came upon about sixty Japanese soldiers. At first I took them to be in a dreadfully drunken state ; in small groups or clusters with no pretence of any military order of marching, they kept tumbling down. We both thought they must all be drunk.

It was just setting in for a wet night, and I was in a dilemma whether to risk it and go forward, or to go round them by a very circuitous route. We decided to proceed, and on coming up to them found they were the most tired out men I had ever seen, yet bravely struggling on. An officer informed us that they had set out the previous night with strict orders to reach our camp that day. I suggested they might camp where they were and come on in the morning, which would be better than another three and a half miles of such a struggle. Their orders, however, were strict, and that was enough ; one might say that almost to a man they were utterly exhausted—a few only (and that a very few) seemed to be able to walk straight. I promised to send down some of our Japanese workpeople to bring them refreshments (beer) and to carry their

packs for them. Not till close on midnight did those patient, obedient soldiers arrive in camp. They would not say where they had come from or whither they were bound, but as they carried telegraph tools in their packs we surmised that they were going to carry on telegraphic communication work somewhere beyond us.

During my visit the Japanese artisans struck for higher wages ; they were then receiving a higher rate than in Pyeng-Yang on account of being within the war area. The matter was reported to the Japanese Consul, there, when he ordered them to go on working at the old rate of pay, with the alternative of conscription under arduous conditions.

By this time the Russians had been forced across the Yalu, and we believed the danger of any further Russian attack to have passed. The Manager having, much to his credit, kept the mine at work all through the crisis, there was no reason why work should not now continue.

The great attraction to the Corean this time, and an interesting object to anyone, was the aerial ropeway over which the cars were run automatically to the mill, crossing a span of 1,600 feet over a valley as they left the shaft house. "Kugeans," or sight seers, were coming in from the villages round, and groups of them could be seen sitting on the hill sides watching the cars going to and fro, the full ones pulling up the empty ones. It was astonishing to see the adaptability of the Chinese and Coreans employed at the mill; a people unused to working round machinery went about their work supervised only by a very small white staff, and did it as if to the manner born.

We returned to Pyeng-Yang by way of the Ta-Tong river and had a most enjoyable trip down it. Here I reported again to the military authorities, and exchanged my permit letter for another to travel to Chinnampo. As it was written in Japanese I did not understand a word of it ; it might have been an order for my execution ! At Chinnampo I again exchanged my letter for another which permitted me to return to Chemulpo.

Here I will make a digression and give a few incidents that occurred in the following year on my fourth visit to Corea.

On this occasion I was inspecting some mines over which we had an option ; they were situated to the north of Pyeng-Yang, and on the way the grave of the first Russian soldier killed in the late war was pointed out to me. From here I paid a most interesting visit to the Oriental Consolidated Gold Mines, still further to the north ; with me was my old friend the Manager of the Unsan Mines who had succeeded me there. Thence we made a professional trip of

inspection to some mines about 120 miles or so south of Seoul where an American Syndicate was opening up some old, native, gold-mines, and the Japanese were working a large, open, alluvial, gold-paddock. The gold-mines have since had a mill erected upon them and are doing well. A large dredge, built in the States, has been erected to work the alluvials ; it has recently started, and is reported to have begun well.

One morning whilst staying here we were employing some Coreans from a small village below (where one of the principal mines was located) in helping to carry and break down the sampled ore. In the afternoon I rode over to visit some of the other mines, and as we passed along the base of a low range of hills firing was going on near their summits. On asking the cause I was told that Japanese soldiers were hunting out some revolutionaries who lived up there.

These " revolutionaries "—so-called by the Japanese—were more properly a gang of robbers.

On our way back we met a small company of the soldiers under two officers. We stopped to speak to one of them who spoke English ; he told us that they had had a light skirmish with the robbers and were then going back to a village across the flats.

That night, about 11 p.m., we heard firing in the direction of the village below the mine. It was a darkish night so we did not venture out to enquire into the cause of it. In the morning we found that the Japanese had returned and surrounded the village, as four of the robbers had entered it to commandeer food from its inhabitants which they had been in the habit of doing. Not a villager had any arms for they were but poor, paddy-farmers, cultivating their own paddy-fields. Nevertheless, many of them were shot by the soldiers for having supplied the robbers, or so-called " revolutionaries," with food. Two of the four robbers were said to have escaped. I had heard of similar cases occurring in the country but had refused to believe them ; here, however, was a case corroborating these reports. There is little doubt that the Japanese, when they first occupied Corea, were very stern and even cruel according to western ideas in putting down any supposed sign of an uprising ; to do them justice, I hear they have since done much for the country and its inhabitants.

A few days afterwards I was in Seoul where I met Stevens ; he was the American financial adviser for some years to the Japanese Government, and at that time financial adviser in Corea to Marquez Ito, the Governor-General. Subsequently he was assassinated as he landed at San Francisco by Coreans who had been sent there for the purpose, and had awaited his arrival. His reputation amongst

the Coreans was that of being more pro-Japanese and more hostile to the Coreans than the Japanese. He invited us to dinner to meet Baron Magato, who was second to Marquez Ito. I at first declined, telling him that my Irish blood was up, and that I did not wish to be rude to his guest which I thought was likely to occur if I met him. However, he persuaded us to go. During dinner we were friendly, but, afterwards, as we sat smoking and talking, the Baron referred to this recent visit of ours to the unhappy occurrence that had taken place, which he excused on the plea that the officers in command were young and inexperienced (for the army after the Russo-Japanese war was short of older and more experienced officers). He said that the village needed a severe lesson, but that the officers had exceeded their general instructions. He further explained that Eastern methods in these respects were from the Western point of view far too drastic, but that experience had taught the Easterners the best methods of dealing with revolutionary outbreaks, and that only severe measures taken in time prevented these outbreaks increasing.

I was not impressed and frankly told him so. He then referred to the Boer War and said we had shot Boers flying the white flag and burnt their farms, and he seemed to believe these German-spread stories. I told him there was a measure of truth in them but only a measure: the Boers had been shot at when under the white flag they had fired on the English. At all events the Boers had had arms, but the Corean villagers had had none and therefore there was no analogy, even if he believed these stories.

The Baron spoke excellent English and was very calm and most polite, doing his best to persuade me that their method of bringing under control a country antagonistic to them was the best, but he made little if any impression on me; on the contrary I am afraid I was even rude to him, finally telling him that, though I had often told the Coreans it would be a good thing for them if Japan took their country over and freed them from their rapacious officials, I no longer thought so. The Baron then referred to the humane way in which they had carried out their war with Russia; but, my blood being up, I told him that I thought they had had an object in doing so, namely, to borrow money afterwards from Europe. The Baron took what I said in very good part though I must own I was somewhat offensive to him, for to me those poor paddy-farmers had been shot down in cold blood.

As it turned out afterwards, the very house Stevens was occupying had a history. It had been built by one of the very few rich Coreans, in European style, and stood in its own well-laid-out grounds. The



owner, a few weeks before the above event, had called the people up and, standing at his own front-door, addressed them ; he protested against the cruel methods of the Japanese who, he contended, treated them as conquerors would have done ; then, drawing his revolver, he shot himself dead. In the East, a man who thus kills himself is looked upon as a patriot, emphasizing his convictions by the highest sacrifice a man can make for the good of his country.

A similar case was that of a Colonel of a Korean regiment which guarded and kept Seoul in order throughout the late war, and relieved Japan of the necessity of doing so herself. When Peace was declared the Colonel was ordered to bring up his regiment on the following morning in order that they should lay down their arms to Japanese troops. The Colonel pleaded that this would be an insult to the regiment and asked to be allowed to quietly disband them and deliver up their arms, begging again that they should not be thus disgraced, but without effect. On the following day he paraded his full regiment ; facing them were the Japanese, and Maxim guns. Placing himself in front of his own men he protested, and then drawing his revolver shot himself. His men then, although greatly outnumbered, commenced firing on the Japanese ; though they were mowed down, many effected their escape.

Rather than believe that these were really Japanese methods, I can only conclude that the Japanese, in adopting the German military system for their army, had absorbed their Hun-like ways.

I will now resume the story of my journey. On returning to Chemulpo I stayed two days waiting for a steamer ; whilst I was here eye-witnesses gave me an account of the plucky steaming out from this port of the *Koritza* and *Variag* to face the Japanese battleships ; it was very fine. They had not the remotest chance of escaping but their brave commanders determined to die rather than surrender. If I remember rightly the *Koritza* (a merchant ship converted into a cruiser) was almost immediately badly struck again and again, but managed to return to the harbour where she sank, while the *Variag* was blown up by her crew. On the Club steps an enterprising Japanese had placed his camera to take a view of the Japanese fleet in the offing ; at the moment of taking his picture the *Variag* blew up, and a good photograph of it was accidentally obtained, a copy of which I still possess.

Whilst I was at Chemulpo the Japanese were still endeavouring to raise the *Koritza*, and it looked as if they had succeeded, but on account of the tremendous tide here they had to let her settle down

again, though eventually they succeeded in raising her. I have in my possession a small silver knife-rest that one of the divers brought up which was given to me for my wife as a memento.

As I was steaming out of Chemulpo Admiral Togo's battleship came in, and we had a very fine view of her as we passed out alongside of her, on my way back to Nagasaki. She had, it was reported, been to sea for months; yet every rope was as neatly coiled upon deck as if she had been a yacht, while the sailors who crowded her decks looked spick-and-span; she had none of the appearance of a weather-worn ship.

## CHAPTER XL.

### ESCORTED BY HUNG HUSEES.

FROM Nagasaki I left in a Japanese steamer for Chifoo and we passed on our voyage quite close to Port Arthur about 10 p.m. one night ; a heavy gale was blowing on shore so that I heard no sound of firing, but the searchlights were everywhere to be seen, searching the hills around. It was difficult to believe that such a scene of bloodshed and slaughter was going on there, for it looked more as if it had been some Manhattan Beach with the glare on the heights around. At Chifoo the Japanese Consul came on board and gave the Captain twelve documents, each reporting the latitude and longitude where a floating mine had been passed by in-coming ships.

From Chifoo I went on by another steamer to Tientsin. There I found still left the evidences of the Boxer attack on this town ; in fact Tientsin had had a far narrower escape and had put up a more desperate defence than had Peking. Against Tientsin the foreign-trained troops of the Chinese were employed, whereas at Peking only inferior troops took part. The opportune arrival of a sotnia of Cossacks and of a 7.5 gun from the *Terrible* saved the town, for when they arrived the outer defences had already been broken down. The volunteers put up a heroic defence, lying out day and night in the open, incessantly firing their rifles, whilst their Chinese servants crept out on their stomachs to bring them food and ammunition.

My object in coming to Tienstin was to visit a large Coal Concession in Manchuria that my firm had acquired before the Boxer outbreak. When this occurred the small staff who were occupied in surveying it had a very narrow escape, for they were cut off from the coast by the Boxers. However, the Chinese Captain of a small military station near there saved them by a stratagem. He had them all taken prisoners and their hands tied behind them, after the Chinese custom. He then marched them down and passed with them as prisoners right through the Boxer lines, and so effected their escape ; on reaching the coast they secured a boat which took them to Tientsin.

When the war broke out all that part of Manchuria was overrun with Hung Husees (or Chinese bandit-soldiers), and again the place had to be abandoned ; my old American drill-man, who had been sent up here from Corea, alone elected to remain and carry on the

drilling, and in this he completely succeeded. The Hung Husees were on good terms with him for he often helped to repair their rifles, and for many months he had remained—quite alone and cut off—quietly carrying on his diamond-boring by the help of a small band of Chinese boys and of a few trained Coreans whom he had brought up with him.

I had come out in order to visit him and to report on the coal prospects of this Concession ; we had had one very comprehensive report by a well-known coal mining engineer from the north of England, whom I had previously sent out for this purpose. The Chinese director of the railway put at my disposal his own saloon, kitchen and chef ; and accompanied by one of my firm's trusted employees, to act as Chinese interpreter, I set out on my journey which occupied about twenty-four hours in the train.

As I travelled along it I was surprised to see the great wall of China, for I had no idea it reached that part of the coast ; it appeared—exactly as one had so often seen it in pictures—following the crests and ridges of the bare-looking mountains, up hill and down dale, and carried across streams by bridges ; it is one of man's stupendous pieces of work, running for fourteen hundred miles, and built of an average width of twenty feet, and the same in height. At last it began to bear down rapidly upon us as we passed through a gap that had been broken in it to allow the railway line to be carried on.

Near the terminus of the railway I found a body guard of Hung Husees waiting to escort us to the mines. They were all neatly dressed in uniforms, well mounted, and armed with rifles and swords and commanded by a Captain in a gorgeous uniform. We were now in Manchuria and all this part of it was practically under the sway of these organized bandits ; each village had to pay a monthly toll to the chief of the Hung Husees, and in return was protected from any further demands by any other marauding parties. My own little squad had been engaged on a month's pay of wages, about 2s. per day each, and 5s. for the captain,—not at all an unduly high price for the risk they ran, for if caught by either the Russians or Japanese no quarter would be given them. I, too, had to take the risk of being found in their company.

We set out very early for we had a long ride to make in order to reach the Concession before sunset. I was well-mounted and together we formed quite a cavalcade. At mid-day we were surprised to hear several shots fired, but, on coming up to the spot whence they seemed to come, we found a party of Hung Husees ; they at first had mistaken us for Japanese and had fired their rifles off as a signal to the others of their band to come in and

round us up. That very day the battle of Loy-Yang was being fought, within a day's ride of us. From our newly met friends we learnt that the day before a Russian foraging party had passed through the spot we were then in, gathering in hay, or rather commandeering it from the farmers around.

After an enjoyable canter most of the way, we arrived a little before sundown. We were met by my old drill-man, and another party of Hung Husees who, with my own escort, were to form a permanent guard after I had returned ; it was deemed wiser to add my escort to his small guard, for a constant watch had to be kept to give warnings of the approach of any Japanese or Russian marauding parties in order to give the drill-man time to ride off. The captain asked me to inspect the force and they were then drawn up in line. I dismounted, and amid the blare of their Chinese trumpets I passed along the line and closely inspected the men as if I were some military expert. I then congratulated the Captain on the appearance of his men and their soldier-like fitness. This was translated to him before all and gave great satisfaction to both Captain and men !

Our diamond-driller had just completed a borehole 1998 feet in depth. This borehole with its cores represented a complete section of the coal measures ; on entering the underlying rocks the driller had stopped his drill—a less matter of fact man would have completed the extra two feet so as to make it the 2,000 feet. Plans and specifications had all been prepared for laying out a big colliery here for connecting it by a branch line with the main one, but later the Concession was given back on terms to the Chinese Government in deference to their wishes.

Returning to Kara-chao, the terminus of the railway 269 miles from Tientsin, I rode over to Hshi-hai-Roo, a little port on the coast, to examine into the practicability of its serving as a shipping-port for coal. Having accomplished the object of my visit, I left for Shanhaikwan where I spent the night. Here were to be seen the International troops, left after the Boxer outbreak, guarding the line as a guarantee for its safety from here to Tientsin ; and the medley of Japanese, English, French, Russian and German officers intermingling with each other, was a sight, I suppose, to be seen nowhere else in the world.

On my way back I took the opportunity of inspecting a shipment of Chinese coolies for Johannesburg from the Port of Chin-Wang-Tau and of visiting the Tong Chang collieries of the Chinese Engineering Company. By far the greater majority of those going to Johannesburg were of the very poor coolie-class, clothed in ragged garments

and with unshaven heads,—the latter is a sure sign of their status, for a Chinaman who cannot afford a “cash” or two to get a shave must be exceedingly poor. Taken on the whole they were physically well-set-up men.

From here I left early direct for Peking and arrived there the same evening. Peking has been so often described that I refrain from any attempt. I put up at the French hotel; I found the proprietor in a very agitated state of mind. That afternoon he had been present at the death of his friend from hydrophobia; both had been bitten some months before by the same dog. He left that evening for Tongking, a long journey; there the French had a Pasteur Institute for inoculation and treatment against this dread disease. He assured his guests that his Chinese steward would look after their comforts which he did.

Amongst the guests was a German whom I felt sure I had seen before. He told us he had just brought down a shipment of “Walers” or Australian horses. That night I saw him go off with a shambock whip in his hand, when I immediately associated him with South Africa; the last time I had seen him was as a convict working on the road outside Barberton, and he was none less, in my opinion, than Veldtheim who shot J. B. Joel in his office in Johannesburg—an incident which was the sensation of South Africa at that time. He was condemned to imprisonment for life. It was a cold-blooded murder, and here was the villain apparently carrying on a prosperous trade in horses! I can only presume that the Boer war had given him the chance of his liberty. Next morning at breakfast I said to him, “I saw you last night with a shambock, a whip one associates with South Africa; have you ever been there?” He immediately replied “no, but it is my ambition to go there, the shambock was given me by an old friend who was keen on persuading me to return with him.”

I paid the usual tourist's visits to the sights, but, among many very interesting ones, I was profoundly disappointed in that of the “Temple of Heaven,” so praised and lauded for its architectural design. I must confess my inability to grasp its wonders; to me it looked mediocre, and altogether a heavy, shoddy-looking building both inside and out.

One of the most interesting of my visits was to a small factory where Cloisonné work was being carried on. Cloisonné is really a very fine mosaic work, though it does not appear to be. It is all made up of the most minute pieces of enamel which together form the pattern and are laid on a base made of copper (or of silver for the finer kinds). This base, shaped to form the vase or bowl, is

itself made up of innumerable, minute, square, tray-like divisions which hold the pieces together ; the rims or dividing pieces are very, very thin and stand lower than the thickness of the enamel pieces. The whole when ready is finally ground, polished, and lightly glazed over, when no trace is left of the multitudinous joints in the design. Peking is noted for its Cloisonné, but here it is an industry of much more modern date than in Canton where some of the older specimens have a peculiar, waxy lustre which cannot now be copied ; it is not known whether this is due to age or was originally laid on as such. Japan, again, is also noted for its fine Cloisonné.

The crowds passing in and out of the city give the foreigner a good opportunity of studying the various classes of people and the great variety of their dresses. Intermingled with them were rich mandarins, carried along in sedan chairs (followed by a crowd of retainers) and in curious, two-wheeled Chinese-carts—a very marked characteristic of Peking. Amongst them at one gate were a number of fine, brown, shaggy-looking camels, their fur coats so thick they might have been those of brown bears.

On one side of the gate leading to the railway station, fastened to the walls of the city, was a big picture that met my astonished eye. It represented a poor Chinese coolie, handcuffed and manacled, with a British Tommy with a fixed bayonet on either side of him. Below in large Chinese characters was affixed this statement as translated to me :—

“ This picture is taken from these foreign devils own picture papers, this is how you will be treated if you go to Johannesburg ”.

And there were further words of advice, warning the people not to be entrapped into going there. “ Taken from our papers ! ” I never for one moment believed it ; the pictures themselves were of European design, the Chinese characters only giving them a foreign appearance. It was evident from them that the Government disapproved of their going to South Africa, and I thought at the time that they were a pretty good libel on us.

Months afterwards, on my return home, I saw copies of these self-same pictures still on an old hoarding in London. Then and then only did it dawn on me to what depths of depravity our party passions had led us in lying thus ! and how skilfully the Chinese had used our own political depravity against us ! I speak disinterestedly for I had never then given my vote to either party, Conservative or Liberal, believing neither to be patriotic, and both too much wrapped up in party-politics to scan the foreign horizon. I had thought, alas ! how degraded was the Chinese Government to have issued those placards ; but they were, to my deep regret, truthful

reproductions of what I afterwards beheld at home. I remember so well remarking at the time to a friend "It looks as if this picture is prophetic of a dying England, all political moral sense gone from her."

It is a long way from Peking to London, but on those walls hundreds, yea, thousands must have seen this placard as they passed out of those gates and believed that foul Hun-like lie as preached to them in its reproduction.

I returned to Tientsin and found a steamer leaving direct for Shanghai. We called in at Chifoo and spent a day there. A steamer leaving an hour after we left here struck a mine just outside the harbour which smashed in her fore-compartment, but she herself was saved. Fifteen Chinese sailors were, however, killed.

Before leaving Shanghai I made a short trip up the Yang-tze to inspect some mines, and then went on to Hong Kong which, with its peak overshadowing the town, had lost none of its loveliness during my absence. Even the town itself, so full of life and interest, had grown cleaner and much improved, while Kowloon, on the mainland opposite, had grown out of all recollection from a few scattered houses into quite a suburban resort.

Sir Paul Chater has done much for the improvement of Hong Kong not only by his influence and foresight but also by his very liberal donations to its Institutions and Charities. His collection of Chinese porcelain of the Ming dynasty is a superb one and probably the finest of this particular period in the world. He is a great connoisseur of Chinese porcelain, and his opinion as a recognized authority is sought after by the leading museums in Europe.

I spent two days here renewing old acquaintances before sailing for Colombo, Ceylon. Before leaving China I must refer to the enormous influence some of our old firms have exercised in the opening up of her trade with us. Take, for example, the old firm of Jardine Matheson & Co., in every Treaty Port they have their large establishments, or "Honges" and, as pioneers, in the early days, led and opened up our commercial relations with China. Their history would be a wonderful one if written. Then there is the firm of Butterfield & Swires who have a large local fleet of steamers, and in spite of Japanese competition, most strenuously waged against them, have held their own. Germans, taking advantage of the enterprise of these firms in pioneer work, are now largely reaping the benefit therefrom by every trickery and meanness possible. Still the names of such firms as I have mentioned are ones to conjure with. The name "Ewo," the Chinese name by which the former firm is known, is most highly respected almost everywhere one goes.



It is these and similar firms who have the most intimate knowledge of Chinese commerce and its possibilities in the future. Our Consuls as officials have not the means of knowing to anything like the same extent ; their very official position prevents it, and though they too have done good work in their way, to help commerce seems *infra dig.* to them. This is where the German Consular service excels our own, as it lays itself out to acquire and give commercial knowledge, and in every way help to forward the interests of German merchants.

## CHAPTER XLI.

### CHINA TO SOUTH AFRICA AND HOME.

I WENT from Hong Kong via Singapore to Colombo. My instructions were to proceed to South Africa, and it was a great question whether I should be able to get a boat direct to Durban or the Cape, without having to go via Aden or Suez. My best chance was to get a berth on a British India boat going to Madagascar; on telegraphing up to Calcutta I received a reply that there was not a single berth available, but that a coolie boat was going to Durban leaving Calcutta in ten days' time and that the Doctor on board of her had the right to take a passenger in his cabin. So I got the Agents here to telegraph him to allow me to share his cabin. The reply was satisfactory.

While waiting for the boat I went up to Kandy. All have heard of Kandy, of the fine views obtained from the train as it climbs up the hills amidst coffee and tea plantations, of those wonderful botanical gardens at Kandy, of that picturesque little town itself, and of its temple where a tooth of Buddha is safely guarded and venerated by all Buddhists. One afternoon, rather late, I had gone for a long walk in the hills surrounding the town and got caught in a terrific thunderstorm; I took shelter, and waited and waited for it to cease but it kept on. At last I had to leave in the middle of the storm; it was already quite dark, and it was not long before I found I had lost my way; not a soul did I meet. I called in at several native huts, but I did not know the native language and the occupants were visibly frightened at seeing a white man out in such a night. I could get nothing out of them, and it was long after mid-night before I eventually got back to my hotel.

I should have liked to avail myself of the time I had here to visit some of Ceylon's world-renowned old ruined cities, but as I had to get off my reports before going to South Africa, I was obliged to forego this chance, much to my regret.

Hearing that my little ship had left Calcutta I returned to Colombo. Going on board I found she was carrying 350 coolies down to Natal. The Doctor's cabin, a small one with two berths in it, was in the stern of the ship, and outside it was another just big enough to hold a table and two chairs; in it our meals were served. Above our cabin was an upper deck just long enough to take the length of two

lounge chairs and with only a single awning to protect us from the sun. The coolies, lying about everywhere, filled the decks, and so difficult and disagreeable a job was it to get through them, that, during the whole of my fourteen days' voyage, only once did I make my way to the officers' quarters. Occasionally one of the officers would pay us a visit.

Never shall I forget that voyage. The sea the whole way was as calm as a mill-pond, not even a ripple on it ; the heat was intense with the tropical sun blazing down on us ; and the smell of the coolies cooking their food in rancid "gee" was sickening ; but worst of all, they never once ceased chattering like so many monkeys. Even at night it was the same, for there were always some groups awake, and when they went to sleep others woke up. We had literally nowhere to walk up and down, not even five clear yards, and all we did was to lie in our long chairs, morning, noon and night, sweltering in the heat, and almost overcome by the smells which emanated not only from the cooking but also from native humanity ; for this latter odour we have no word, but the Portuguese call it "Catinga." Then again, we were nearly driven out of our senses by the Babel of an unknown tongue, making itself heard as if the very atmosphere was alive with these sounds. The doctor was handsomely paid for going through this exasperating experience and had a good inducement to stand it ; but as for me, I had to pay for it, and paid nearly as much as if I had been on a P. & O. boat !

The only excitement we had was one morning when the cry "man overboard" from the doctor aroused me from my stupor. The ship's boat was launched ; the man overboard, a native, was swimming well, he dodged the boat, dived, and gave her crew quite a task in catching him ; but when they did catch him they half drowned the poor beggar before they pulled him into the boat. It turned out that this coolie had been punished by the first officer, and had deliberately jumped overboard to give trouble ; they all know how strict the Board of Trade are about them, so he had no fear of not being picked up, and had only done this to cause trouble.

Four days out from Colombo we passed the little island of Chargoë, and five days later the French island of Réunion. Not a single vessel of any description did we sight until just off the N.E. point of Madagascar when we passed a sailing vessel, becalmed, and wondered how long she had been in that condition, and how long it would be before she moved again.

Arriving at Durban I left a few hours afterwards for Johannesburg. Durban had grown much—I should say doubled—in size since I was there ; the Berea up on the hill overlooking the town was one

long line of well-built houses where the better class of Europeans lived.

After leaving Durban I was, in twenty-seven hours, safely ensconced in the Grand National Hotel, Johannesburg. The first day I had to spare I found out from the Chamber of Mines to which mines the shipment of coolies I had seen at Chin-Wang-Tau had been distributed and went out specially to see them. The two mines were the Klienfontein and the Modderfontein. I spent a whole day with the Manager of the former mine, going over the coolies' compound, and discussing various matters with him in connection with them.

Now, as regards the "slaves" depicted by our politicians at home; I had seen them first in China; here in South Africa I found them after their day's shift, clothed in decent khaki suits, heads shaved, pig-tails well-plaited, and with every appearance of being well-groomed and well-fed. Never had they been better-fed. In Southern China, where the staple food is rice,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. to  $1\frac{3}{4}$  lbs. is a day's ration. In Northern China, whence these coolies came, rice is only a luxury; their staple food is millet, in South Africa called Kaffir-corn, which the Kaffirs look upon as too coarse to eat and only use for making beer. A Chinese coolie's allowance per day here in addition to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. of rice was a big loaf of bread about a kilo. in weight, potatoes *ad libitum*, one pound of meat a week (in China he gets none, unless pork on some special feast day), a ration of fresh vegetables according to what was in the market, and tea. Tea was a luxury, which few, if any, of these coolies ever drank in north China, yet here it was supplied *ad libitum*, and later on the Government passed an order that it had to be taken down to those at work underground. It was beyond any coolie to consume all this ration, and the surplus he traded with the Kaffirs for anything they offered in exchange.

Now how about wages? In North China 3d. per day was a fair wage; I doubt if any ever obtained a regular wage of sixpence a day; but here the *minimum* was 2s. per day and "all found." On this basis an Englishman paid 5s. per day at home would receive here 40s. per day and "all found."

It was no wonder that when the Chinese learnt that I had come from China, representing my firm—whose name, "Ewo" in Chinese, was well-known to many of them—regularly mobbed me, surrounding me in one big crowd, all vociferously clamouring to know if there was any truth in the rumour that the Government was about to repatriate them. They did not want to go; here they had the chance of their lives; lived in large compounds;

had baths, and hot and cold water supplied for their use (a use which they very quickly adopted, though I must own I was greatly surprised to hear it) ; yet the Johannesburg capitalist was accused of having enticed away these people from their own homes to be enslaved here.

A more villainous, bare-faced political cry was never before got up for party purposes. What did Europe think when we thus accused ourselves of re-starting slavery, what effect had it on Ireland? Our worst enemy could not have libelled us more unjustly by outrageous lying than did these shameless politicians. Such are politics !

Almost, if not quite, as scandalous a political affair was that of hinting and passing the word round that General Roberts was getting into his dotage when he warned England that Germany was preparing for war, and that when war came it would burst like a bomb upon us.

Again, take the case of the island of St. Tomé ; there we were buying cocoa during the " Chinese Slavery " scandals from the owners of cocoa-plantations where it was all grown under the most oppressive system of absolute slavery ; this fact was well-known to us and had been reported upon by an English Colonel sent out by our Government for that purpose ; but did our politicians take any notice of it ? No ! We went on all the same drinking our cocoa, indifferent to the misery of those negro-slaves and pretending the Johannesburg financiers were the slavers.

I have stated facts as I have found them, and as a Britisher I make my remarks with no unnecessary warmth. If we as a nation are losing all sense of old England's honesty and bluntness, and instead seek our power by diplomatic finesse, accompanied by deliberate misrepresentation to the masses with the object of gaining votes, we shall assuredly lose that power which has created this great Empire, and shall, like Russia, end in Bolshevism. It may be that this terrible war is God calling to us to repent as He did to His people of old, and let not our eyes be dim and our ears so dull that we, as they, cannot perceive His voice.

At Modderfontein I found exactly the same conditions prevailing. The Chinese, who had landed only so recently, were quite contented, and were alarmed only lest they should be sent back home and lose the chance of their lives.

After some little time spent in Johannesburg I paid another visit to the Low Country in the north-east of the Transvaal, and subsequently another to Swaziland, but having in my first volume described my former visits there, I will not refer to them again.

On my return I spent a little further time on the Rand professionally, and then set out on my journey home where I arrived in the Spring of 1905.

During the years which have intervened between then and now I have paid many further visits to foreign countries. I have been again to Corea, Japan and China, and have made two visits to Tong King or French China ; I have been to Yunan, and British North Borneo, and thence to Bangkok and to both the eastern and the western sides of Siam, crossing over its boundaries into lower Burma. Later I went to Dutch East Borneo ; to the Malay States of Selangor and Perak ; to Utah, Arizona, California, and Mexico ; also paid two visits to the regions south of Hudson's Bay, namely to the Porcupine gold-fields and the silver-mines of Cobalt. Again, I have been to the Far East of Siberia, near to the northern boundary of Corea ; to the island of Saghalien, through the Primorski provinces, and up the Amur river to Khabarovka and back again to Vladivostok. Thence I went to Manchuria ; several times to Central Siberia and Turkestan as far as Tashkend. During the war in 1915 and again in 1916 I visited Russia and Siberia and was on a visit to the Don regions at the outbreak of the revolution. There were also visits to mines in Norway, but space will not permit me to recount incidents and experiences in these countries as fully as I have done hitherto ; I shall have to curtail them somewhat.

## CHAPTER XLII.

### TO SPASSKY COPPER MINES, SIBERIA.

THE summer after my return from the East I paid my first real visit to Siberia, having only passed through it when coming home previously (as already related).

My daughter was at school in Germany near Ems where my wife and I spent a fortnight ; leaving them there I departed for Cologne, thence for Berlin, and travelling onwards via Warsaw I found myself in Moscow once more. I stayed at the hotel "National," the old "Slavianski (where we stayed before) having sunk down to a very second rate level.

As I was detained here on business I had a very good opportunity of visiting many of the city's principal objects of interest ; the Tretiakoffski picture gallery in particular is remarkable for its large collection of Vereschagin's paintings, but what were perhaps as interesting as any of its many magnificent churches, paintings, and museums, were the restaurants where the ordinary moujik resorts.

In to these I penetrated, and the study of these people was inexpressibly delightful. With rough, rugged faces, mostly bearded, their simple conversations as translated to me made me feel that they were a kindly, sympathetic race if very ignorant ; from their outward appearance one would be led to think they were as hard as nails, and probably they were physically, but mentally they struck me as the reverse and as being more like simple children, with perhaps a vein of craftiness running through them. With further knowledge of them as years went by, I learnt more about them at each fresh visit—good-hearted, always willing to help the foreigner, very plain and outspoken, and very inquisitive. This was my first introduction to the poorer moujik-class of Russia.

The richer and educated class I found open handed, most hospitable and genial. I never remember, when once I was known to them, receiving anything from them but politeness, though they were rough in their ways ; for even amongst the better classes this feature shows itself, under a good deal of polish ; at first this roughness may sometimes be mistaken for rudeness, but it is not meant so. Taking the Russian all round I place them as one of the most genial, open-hearted and good-natured of races, always ready to do a kindness, but they are an inconstant and inconsequent

people. Even the bureaucratic official if approached politely is courteous. But that characteristic of human nature (common to all nationalities) whereby a uniform of one sort or another seems so often to give the owner a "swelled-head," is found here as elsewhere; and unfortunately almost every second or third person one meets is in uniform!

At all events my visit here was long enough for me to feel that, though going to Siberia—even then thought to be a terrible country—I was going among a sympathetic race, and that I should not fare badly. I had a long journey to make and I did not know the language, but there was this one fact staring me in the face and it removed any apprehensions I might have had.

I left Moscow for the mine whose whereabouts I did not definitely know, save that it was (as I then thought) about a few hours' drive from Petropavlovsk, a station three and a half days' journey by train from Moscow, on the Siberian railway.

The war with Japan was still being waged; Russian troops were being rushed to the front. En route we passed many trains going out to the Far East, each carried 250 soldiers, each had its complement of artillery and cavalry. The number of trains per day far surpassed the utmost limit which the military critics of Germany, France, and England had said was possible. Even then the ordinary passenger trains were keeping good time. Every arrangement seemed orderly and working like clock-work. The hospital trains I passed, returning with wounded, were fitted up well, even luxuriously, the nurses, like our nurses, were in spotlessly clean linen, and the reports contained in our papers of these carriages being robbed, and of their being a disgrace to the nation, had no grounds that I could see. At the station restaurants, nurses and officers flirted, laughed, and chatted with each other, but all appeared to be orderly.

I was somewhat taken aback when, our train stopping at a place where there was no station, three soldiers with fixed bayonets entered my compartment and stood over me, while one of them drew down the blinds. "Well," I thought, "they have discovered I have been in Japan, Corea, and Manchuria during the war and take me for a spy." I went on reading my book, when presently "rumble, rumble" was heard; we were passing over a big bridge; soon afterwards the train stopped and my three guards withdrew. As they did so, I put my head out of the door, and looking up the corridor I saw three soldiers retiring in a similar manner from each compartment. We had crossed a big bridge, and their presence had been a precautionary measure to guard



against any blowing up of the bridge by means of bombs. Again and again this happened whenever we approached a bridge. I was told that every bridge, down to a culvert, was guarded.

At last I arrived early one morning at Petropavlovsk station where I expected to be met. On getting out of the train there was not a soul to meet me. I hired a drosky and started for the town about one mile distant. I had no address in Russian; but I knew the Manager of the mine had an Agent somewhere in town; but, do all I would, I could not make my drosky-driver understand. He stopped again and again and entered into conversation with people, who in their turn questioned me in this unknown language. I pulled up at likely-looking shops where perhaps someone might speak French, but without result.

After about two hours and no solution to the riddle, I began to wonder what my next move should be, when suddenly I caught sight of "Spassky Zavod" on a door-plate. I had asked for Spassky; no one could explain to me that it was far away; I nonplussed them; but had I added Zavod (works) anyone could have told me where the "Spassky office" was. The name Spassky was enough for me; I jumped out of the drosky and entered the house.

An old Russian and his wife met me at the door. Evidently they did not expect me—very strange, I thought. However, I entered *nolens volens*, and there on the table I saw an English paper. That settled the matter, so I made them bring in my baggage, and very soon by sundry signs, I got the excellent pair to understand that I wanted a carriage to drive to the Spassky mines. The old people at last, after many efforts on my part, realized that I wanted to get on, and that quickly. The old lady busied herself with getting me breakfast while the old man disappeared.

After a hearty breakfast and many glasses of Russian tea from the big samovar which was placed as customary at the head of the table and over which the lady of the house, as always, presided, a "troika" drew up at the door. A "troika" is a carriage which is drawn by three horses abreast of each other. The carriage itself was not unlike a heavily-hooded Victoria. Into this I got, but, finding no seat, it was some time before I understood that I was not meant to sit up in it, but to recline in the bottom. Packed well with hay, all felt very comfortable! My baggage was fixed in a rack fixed on behind the carriage. A small boy jumped on the box and away we drove.

A little outside the town at the foot of the hill we found the bridge broken and the boy plunged his horses without a moment's thought into the boggy ground to span which the bridge had been

built. There we stuck, half turned over, and there was no getting out or in without sinking deep into the mud. After what seemed an interminable time some teamsters came to our help, and were not long in extricating our horses who by this time seemed fairly sunk in the mud and unable to move.

This was a rough beginning to my first experience of post-travelling in Russia, and I thought it would be very late before I should reach the mine. So on we went, until coming to a post-station we stopped to change horses, a proceeding which I afterwards found usually occupied about a couple of hours ; but the owner of the post-station, as far as I could make out, wanted me to deposit a sum of money about equal to the value of the carriage. As I look back now I think he was very clever in making me understand. Accordingly I paid the sum, and, as I afterwards learnt I had really bought the carriage. Evidently, what he had attempted to explain was that it was policy to buy the carriage, as the mine was far away, and many changes of horses would be involved on the journey ; that if I bought it I should not have to turn out my baggage and belongings at each station, and on my return could resell the carriage. Anyway, without realizing all this, I left again in what was really my own carriage.

Darkness set in and still we continued on from one station to another. Morning dawned and there I found myself still on those vast Steppes or plains ; it seemed to me as if all my bones were broken, so stiff and bruised was I owing to the rough jolting along a so-called road. Worst of all, I did not know what to do with my head ; it was decidedly in the way ! I tried to pack the hay up into a pillow, but with each jolt it would slip down, and my head come in contact with the bottom of the carriage ; hard as my head is, it was so bounced about that the strain on the muscles of my neck, which were softer, was so great that it simply gave me agonies of discomfort. Stopping at one of the little post-stations I succeeded in obtaining a good breakfast of bread and butter, milk and eggs ; but do what I could it was impossible to find out how much further off Spassky was.

All that day we travelled on from one post to another, each from sixteen to twenty miles distant from the last, and at each a fresh boy mounted the box. Fortunately, having bought the carriage, unknown to myself, I had not to change into a new one at each change of horses. The price of the hire of the horses is so much per verst (two thirds of a mile), and as the distance between the post-stations was marked up it was easy to calculate the amount to be paid.

As the sun went down I came to the conclusion that the old couple at Petropavlovsk had misunderstood me, and that I was on the road to some place other than Spassky. Now, as we were travelling due south I decided that we were on the road to Tashkend, about 1,000 miles from Petropavlovsk, and that eventually I should reach that place.

During the day we passed through some prettily-wooded country and through the very picturesque village of Shustcke on the side of a lovely-looking lake with hills surrounding it,—the first break in the monotony of these ever-rolling, slightly-undulating plains. Herds of cattle and some camels were passed now and again and Khirgese riding about herding them.

All that night we continued, and still we went on ; the third day broke and, strange as it may seem, the stiffness had passed off, and, with the exception of a painful neck, I had become quite accustomed to the jolting.

The third night set in and onward we continued ; the journey was broken only by the frequent stops at post-stations, where I snatched a little sleep, though I dozed in a way as we travelled along, even amidst all the jolting.

About 4 a.m. we drove into Akmolinsk, the capital of this section of the country,—a province larger than the whole of France. My driver drove me straight into the courtyard of the Agent of the mines living here, a Russian. His wife, however, knew a little French, and to her I explained who I was and where I wanted to go. To my great relief I found I was on the right road so far, and that here I should leave the post-road, with about another 153 miles to travel. I turned in and slept till 7 a.m., getting a well-earned rest and clean up, followed by a good breakfast.

At 8 a.m. I started again, still in my carriage, but this time provided with a large basket of provisions and a few bottles of beer. On the road there were no villages ; the only one near was some three to four versts off the road. About 10 a.m. we were overtaken by my host of the early morning accompanied by two friends ; all three were riding, and with them they had brought a lunch-basket and some wine ; so we called a halt and camped to eat our second breakfast, after which they re-saddled and went back while we continued on. We came to a river in the afternoon with some waggons crossing it ; one was stuck fast in the river ; the two men in it would not get out of it, but an old woman jumped right in clothes and all, and sank above her waist in the water ; she got hold of the horses heads and actually dragged them out.

About 6 p.m. we camped along a small stream, and a little later

the waggons we had left behind came in and camped alongside of us. I espied the old lady of the river episode, and took over a bottle of beer which I gave her, for, poor soul, she had earned it well. I found afterwards that the story of this little act had gone all round the population at the mine as proof that an Englishman has a good heart. It was a lovely night and mother earth was a kind of feather-bed after the previous nights' experience. Soundly I slept under heaven's canopy.

Next morning we were not up until 8 a.m. ; then we lit camp fires and breakfasted, so that it was well on to ten o'clock before we again set forth. There was no immediate haste as we had sent forward a Khirgese with a message to the mine to send out some spare horses to meet us half-way, and we reckoned we should easily be there before them. So we slowly pushed on and met them at about sundown. At about 9 p.m. we reached the coal-mines situated about twenty-six miles from the Smelters, the central camp, which was my destination.

After a short break, I pushed on again with fresh horses and arrived about 11 a.m. ; pulling up at the Manager's house, here I knocked and knocked and could wake no one up, and was just getting back into the troika to camp for the night when the door opened, and before me stood the Manager in his dressing-gown, half-awake and half-asleep. He seemed greatly surprised at my sudden appearance, led me into a large sitting-room, and asked me to help him move the table to the side of it.

I wondered if he was still dreaming. Having removed the table he then got down on his knees and proceeded to roll up a large drugget which covered the floor. Next he handed me the lamp, asking me to hold it ; then he opened a trap door and disappeared into the cellar below ; all this without a word of explanation. Presently he appeared with an immense demijohn such as is used to hold sulphuric acid. This he pushed up the steps before him and finally landed it on the table. I had no idea what the colourless fluid in it was. Finally he disappeared out of the room for a moment and came in again carrying a couple of tumblers, into each of which he welled out a half-glass of what turned out to be vodka. I then asked if there was anything to eat, but he said he was sorry, the servants slept in the village and had gone off with the keys.

I was very tired and hungry, but I must confess that fluid went down my throat with more gusto than I have ever felt since when drinking vodka. Vodka is a very pure spirit, a little below gin in strength. My friend, after his tot, seemed to wakē up a bit, and after a brief chat he informed me that there was not a spare room in

the house, but that, if I went up the street, I should find there was a bedroom in the first house on my left, that I should go round by the back of it, and should find it open.

Bidding him good-night I proceeded, leaving all my belongings in the troika ; the horses, meantime, had been taken out of it. I was too tired to worry about my baggage, and was quite indifferent as to whether it would be stolen or not. Going round by the back-way I found that part of the building was under repairs, and, after nearly breaking my legs in trying to get through a mass of planks and poles, I went round to the front of the house and tried one of the windows. Finding it open I pushed it up, and was proceeding to climb in through it, when a light was struck by a man in bed, and I saw he had a revolver in his hand. I called out that I was looking for a spare bed, when I was immediately answered by a hearty laugh, and " I came very near shooting you," from the lips of H.,— a brother engineer and countryman of mine.

Thus ended my first trip of 525 miles into the Siberian Steppes, and I realize what a very strange experience it all was when I look back on it.

Next morning I met the Manager and his wife and two daughters, girls of about fifteen and sixteen, and a very accomplished family they proved. We laughed over my previous night's welcome, the Manager admitting that he never really woke up and that it was only when he woke in the morning that he had properly taken in the situation. He had had an Oxford University and Royal School of Mines training, and had married an American lady, and was himself a naturalized American. The mine was still seventy-five miles away from the Smelters here, and as it was the key of the position which I had come to inspect and report upon, it was agreed that he and I should set out immediately for it ; that he would leave me after introducing me to the mine foreman ; and that later I should join them here and spend the balance of my time between these smelting-works and the coal mine I had passed the previous evening.

I started with him in the Company's troika to cover the seventy-five miles, but instead of reclining with the feeling that my head was a nuisance, I found myself comfortably leaning against large Russian pillows. The Russian never thinks of travelling without these, they form part and parcel of every traveller's equipment. In my ignorance I had started without them, and a severe reprimand was sent back to the Agent at Petropavlovsk for not having provided me either with them or with a basket of provisions for the road. All wondered how I had endured the discomfort of the journey without them ; endurance it certainly was, and for the first time in

my life I would have been glad on the journey if I could have stowed away my head elsewhere, for it had been decidedly in the way.

Immediately after breakfast we sent three horses to go on before us to a station a little beyond the half-way point to the mine, and three hours later we started. On the way I came across my first vision of a Khirgese camp on the move. Crossing the horizon in front of us was stretched out a panorama echoing, as it were, the days of Abraham. There, moving across the plains, were herds of cattle, sheep and horses, so numerous that at first they looked like low-moving clouds ; but as we drew nearer to them they gradually resolved themselves into a patriarchal picture of ancient days. There we saw the shepherds mounted high on camels, herding their flocks as they slowly grazed along ; there, mounted on what might have been the Egyptian forbidden horses, were the cattle-men attending their herds ; troops of wild horses were more restively feeding, occasionally galloping off to be rounded up and brought back again ; herds of those strange, weird-looking animals, camels, brought up the rear, many of them packed with the household belongings and " Yurtas " of the camp, while not a few carried strange-looking canopies under which sat the women and children in a kind of curiously-constructed panier superstructure.

As we came up to some of them we learnt that they were trekking to some wells. One could easily picture Abraham and his flocks, and could understand too the story of the wells, and what their possession in a comparatively waterless country meant. These people had started in the early spring from the warmer lands in the south, and had just turned to trek back, having reached their furthest limit northwards ; they were timing their trek so as to reach their winter encampment at the end of the summer-season, somewhere south of the Tashkend railway running through Turkestan.

About 10 p.m. we reached our destination having completed the latter half of the journey with the three horses sent on ahead of us ; we made the journey of seventy-five miles in about thirteen hours. These Khirgese horses are wonderful little creatures and are possessed of great staying powers. That same night we went down into the mine as the Manager wanted to return at daybreak. After a hasty run through the main part of it I was not sorry to turn in for I was fairly tired out, and that night I slept as soundly as any man, I think, ever did.

Here I spent a little time inspecting the mine closely. A few Englishmen acted as overseers to the miners who were Khirgese with a sprinkling of Russians acting as timber-men. When one

considers that these Khirgese are nomads brought up essentially as cattlemen, on the steppes, it is truly marvellous to see how soon they take to a mining life and how they become, under supervision, fairly efficient miners. They are Mongolians and are all Mahommedans.

Whilst here I visited nearly all the Russian families and was impressed chiefly with the way the women folk managed their children, and carried on all the household work, cooking included, and kept their quarters clean and tidy on the whole.

The mine had been started long ago by Kalmuck workers, a prehistoric race. In Byzantine times caravans from the Atlas mountains passed near here and made their way to trading ports on the Black Sea. From Russian researches into ancient history we learn further that large quantities of gold, silver, copper and lead were brought down in these caravans. I had reached the extreme limit of my journey 575 miles distant from the Siberian railway line, and, as I left the mine with my face turned homewards, I could picture to myself this mine turning out large quantities of copper and supporting a thriving community. This ultimately came to pass

Arriving back at the Smelters, then comparatively small works, I spent a little further time between there and the coal-mine before setting out on my return journey. During this time Khirgese sports were held in my honour, consisting principally of racing with some wrestling; in the wrestling women took part. The English community riding out joined the large crowd of mounted Khirgese who had congregated at the winning end of the course. Hither and thither the Khirgese rode round exchanging visits with each other, and discussing the merits and demerits of their respective horses. Suddenly a murmur arose and "They're off" went through the crowd, and quickly they wheeled their horses into position and were all scanning the horizon, but I could see nothing. The keen steppe-sight of these nomads of the plains enabled them to see what I could only make out by the aid of a pair of field-glasses; six miles away the racers were coming along looking like little specks; closer and closer they came and with them the excitement amongst the onlookers increased. Then I began to see the riders lashing and urging their steeds, and they thundered past us;—taken generally it was a wonderfully close race, for of those that came in, some five or six, there were not four lengths between the winner and the last. A six mile race; at breakneck speed the whole way; what staying powers! How wonderfully well-matched, too, were the horses!

From time to time other and similar races were run, but the first race was the one, par excellence. Wrestling and some fancy

riding (of no special interest) formed part of the sports. Thus we spent a day that meant to the staff and workers one of considerable excitement, for in the everyday monotony of their lives on these steppes a day's break is as nectar. To myself it was of especially great interest as it was my first introduction to a display of Khirgese horsemanship.

We wound up the day with a moonlight picnic, riding out to a kind of nullah where we lighted fires, and cooked, and ate our supper, by the light of a full moon. As we sat chatting and discussing the day's exploits some Khirgese horsemen appeared on the top of the bluffs above us, silhouetted against the skyline in such clear and well-defined outline that all remarked upon its extraordinary vividness—a fact which proved that it must have been due to some exceptional atmospheric conditions.

Another night the Russian workmen got up a theatrical entertainment. They knocked up roughly a stage in the open air with its scenery painted by one of their number ; and local talent among the women-folk prepared the dresses and the costumes ; while the artisans themselves, all amateurs, gave us a really clever piece of acting, in which the chorus-songs were especially good.

To see the Khirgese in the smelting works poling and refining the copper and then ladling out the molten metal and pouring it into moulds was a revelation ; it seemed almost impossible that they, a nomad people, should take to such an occupation as that of standing over the great heat of the furnaces ; moreover, they became proficient in this poling of the copper, a process that at home we consider demands the highest skill and long experience. But here were Khirgese not only carrying out a delicate operation successfully, but doing it without even taking a sample to judge the moment when poling should cease. For if the process is not instantly stopped at the right moment the copper becomes overpoled and consequently spoilt.

I had now completed my task. My brother-engineer, a partner of the Manager and the same man who nearly shot me, set out with me to return home by way of the Irtysh River to Omsk, and thence by the Siberian railway. Our object in going this way was to explore the steppes in that direction in order to see if a waggon-road could be made across them ; if this were feasible it would shorten the route by about 120 miles. Djumabek, the old Chief of the Khirgese of this district, sent out Khirgese ahead with a change of horses to be posted at about half the distance.

Bidding goodbye to our host and hostess and their family, and with a very pleasant recollection of these pioneers on the frontier of



Russian civilization, we set out in a troika. The weather was getting very cold, and rain and sleet were falling. The first night out we put up at a Russian squatter's home, and Russian-like they did everything for our comfort. We gave them some tea and some sugar, and we might have given them a fortune so grateful were they! Thenceforth we had nothing but the bare steppes until we reached the pretty town of Barna Oul; it was situated in a cluster of hills about fifty to sixty miles from Pavlodar, a town on the Irtish; but before reaching there our Khirgese driver lost his way, and finding ourselves in a boggy country we had to make a big *détour* round it, losing six hours thereby.

One very wet and cold evening we came across a Khirgese *Yurta* (native tent), and glad we were to gain its shelter and cook our evening meal—soup and tea. One morning, I think it was the fourth one, at 7 a.m. we came to the ferry across the Irtish river a little below Pavlodar; as we drove up to it, going down the river, and passing us by was the last passenger-steamer of the season on her way to Omsk! Frantically we tried to wave to her to stop and pick us up, but without avail.

We had now to face about 250 miles of posting along a road which ran to Omsk. At Pavlodar we met some Danes. On asking them what they were doing here they told us they had come to teach settlers how to make butter, and organize an export trade; but we said, "Where are the cattle?" "Oh! they are coming," they said, "we are the advance guard." So it has proved for there is a big butter-export now along this river. From the beginnings of a small trade then, the annual export trade of butter from Siberia has grown to something over three million sterling, and is mostly in the hands of the enterprising Danes. The only consul for the whole of Siberia was a Dane, engaged in the agricultural machinery trade and also interested in the butter-trade, personally a charming man; and thirteen years afterwards I find still only one Consul. It is true, though almost impossible for anyone to believe, that the ignorance at our Foreign Office concerning Siberia continues to this day—unless during the war it has awakened to the fact that Siberia is to Russia what the Western States have been to the Eastern States, in fact another America.

We started again to post along the road, and when out about twenty-five miles came in sight of a little steamer lying alongside a small wharf, on which a veritable hill of salt was heaped up. We hailed the Captain and found he was a Norwegian by birth, though a naturalized Russian, Captain Grönbeck by name. He was about to start to tow four salt-laden barges to Omsk, and agreed to take

us as passengers. He spoke English fluently, and his wife and a grown-up daughter on board both understood it a little. A very delightful voyage we made with them ; we always tied up at night, and it took us four days to reach Omsk.

The Captain told us the story of how he was the first to hear of the wreck of the Gordon Bennett North-East-Arctic Expedition at the mouth of the Lena River, and he told us how he collected some Samoyedes and went with them, carrying provisions collected in those inhospitable regions, and was thus the means of saving the survivors ; some members of the expedition had then already died. I remember what an excitement there was at the time when the news came to hand of the loss of the expedition. He had been engaged in surveying the Lena in its lower reaches and hence happened to be in that vicinity.

The Captain had also surveyed the lower reaches of the Ob river, and was very full of his scheme to open up Central Siberia by means of it ; steamers of 2,000 tons can come up the Ob and then the Irtysh almost to Omsk, and steamers of 500 to 600 tons to Pavlodar, and even, in flood-time, beyond to Semipalatinsk,—a total distance of some 2,500 to 3,000 miles ; he explained that as the mouth of the Ob is usually ice-blocked his scheme involved the trans-shipment of goods to a port which he claimed was always open when Archangel was ; this transshipment would be by means of a railway (I think he said about sixty miles long) starting from a point about 150 miles south of the mouth of the Lena. In this way the splendid Ob water-way could be made to open up the whole of Siberia, with its fine system of rivers and connecting canal-links. He showed us also, by figures, that freight by his proposed route round Norway to Petrograd would be cheaper than by rail over the heavy grades of the railway across the Urals.

On the left bank of the Irtysh we passed a high, frozen, gravel-bank, in which we saw a recently made excavation from which a Mastodon had been dug out in perfect condition. In Omsk I succeeded in obtaining a piece of ivory from its tusks, cut into little Esquimaux figures by one of the Siberian prisoners living here.

The Irtysh was a broad river with high banks, along which a few small settlements were to be seen, with here and there a Khirgese camp whose horsemen raced our steamer as we passed along its banks.

In Omsk we spent a little time with the Russian Mining Officials. In the hotel it seemed that they turned night into day, and *vice versa*. In the daytime all was intensely quiet, at night the noise of drunken orgies was most disturbing. Our Agent here introduced me to his

friends, who invited us to their houses ; this enabled us to see a good deal of the private life of the Russians. I could not help being struck by their keenness in asking questions about England and the English, but, naturally, being so far removed from Great Britain their ideas were rather hazy ; but less so, I think, than the average Englishman's ideas of Russia ! Siberia is to him a land where only political prisoners live, and is possessed of a climate which is insupportable.

Here we learnt that Peace had been signed with Japan, but that Russia herself was in the throes of a Revolution. On our arrival in Moscow we found that in the daytime the people shopped and went about much as usual, but after dark few ventured out, and at our hotel we were advised not to go out or sit near windows for fear of any stray shots. There was some little fighting going on ; it was as if the fighting were down in the London Docks, while we in the west-end saw nothing of it.

One morning a sensation was caused by the news that a leading and very popular doctor had been shot dead by his own daughter, who was only eighteen years of age, and said to be a beautiful girl. The family was known to be a very united one and affectionate ; nevertheless this poor girl had deemed it a duty to shoot her own father who was actively working against the revolutionary party which she had herself secretly joined. I met several Guards' officers, well-educated men, all of whom spoke fluent English ; to my astonishment they openly advocated pure nihilism and cried " Down with everything," in the hopes that some good might arise out of it. It seemed almost as if the Evil One were abroad, breathing a spirit of the deepest pessimism.

The actual position in Moscow was greatly exaggerated in our own papers ; my wife and many of my friends believed that it would be impossible for me to get out of it ; on my return home I read some of the descriptions of what had been happening in Moscow at the very time I was there, and I can only say they were most grossly exaggerated. Subsequently there were one or two day's fighting in the centre of the town when the cavalry charged a mob, but order was quickly re-established.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

### FURTHER VISITS TO THE SPASSKY MINES.

ON my second visit to Spassky, after an interval of about three years, I had no difficulty in finding my way there, and I found that a great change had taken place. The coal mine was connected with the Smelters by a railway of twenty-seven miles. Modern Smelters had been erected, and a great building programme for the benefit of the work-people and the staff had also been carried out.

The former Manager had recently gone, and a new one had taken his place. The former one had been very popular and rather easy-going. The new one, therefore, had to face a very difficult situation for naturally he began by being unpopular. Copper-production was costing too much, and economy all round had to be effected. For about three months he had withstood a very formidable strike. I arrived when the back of it was practically broken, but still a large number of workmen were on strike.

It was a strike the like of which I have never heard of before nor since ; it was what one might call a " Silence Strike." Crowds of strikers followed the manager about wherever he went, but not a word was spoken ; no conversation even was carried on between them. Day and night this had been going on ; they followed him into his house ; stood in a crowd round him at his meals ; at night he had to disrobe in his own bedroom with a crowd still filling the room ; when he awoke in the morning a crowd was still there. Three or four policemen were powerless to prevent their entry into his house. On my arrival they had been persuaded to give up following him into the house, but whenever we went out of it they followed—a silent, protesting mob. How he ever stood it without giving in was a marvel, and required an iron nerve. I, even in company with himself, found it nerve-racking. Not a word was spoken and no threats were made. A band of men who had the determination to carry out such a strike were not to be treated lightly ; but he won. Several of the English were intriguing to get the former manager back. The majority of them were sent home, and when the Russians heard that they were going I think they decided to give in.

Six months later I again made the journey when I found a totally different state of affairs ; all was running smoothy and

copper was being produced in a steadily-increasing ratio, and cost of production had been so reduced that a very handsome profit was being made. The Manager had been joined by his wife, three boys, and a governess, and they continued to reside here for several years afterwards—a good example of an English lady's pluck, not only in acting as a pioneer, but in exercising moral influence both with the English staff and Russians. She was, I consider, a great asset to the concern, as the two races were brought into contact with each other socially by the pleasant evenings, tennis-parties, and entertainments which she and her husband were mainly instrumental in getting up for them.

Of other trips I made to the above mines I remember one in particular. It was the height of summer and very hot, and on my arrival at Petropavlovsk I was met by a motor which they had sent down for me ; it was its first trip to the railway. We left one morning about 4 a.m. and, when two hours out, we met a number of waggons going into town with a few pack-camels alongside them ; these last took fright at our sudden appearance and careered away across the plains ; these, again, started off a waggon with a number of women and children fast asleep in it ; the waggon overturned and deposited them in a heap, as they slid out of it one on top of the other ; fortunately they fell on a soft spot. Russian-like they took it all as a matter of course, and laughed heartily over it, their one concern being to get their clothing on—for they were all in a fairly nude state.

We had not gone far when one of our inner tubes burst, and no sooner had we repaired this than we had a whole series of breakdowns, and all day I was sweltering in the heat trying to help. That night we made a fresh start, and towards morning broke down again. About four miles ahead of us I spotted a village, so I made up a small "swag" and, with this over my shoulder, made off for the village, much to the chagrin of my Russian chauffeur. Happily it proved to be a post-station, so I posted the rest of the way and arrived a half-day ahead of the motor.

Another time it was dead-winter and the cold intense, and as I was unable to get a covered sleigh I had to post down in an open one. When I arrived at the mine everyone was extremely surprised that I had come in an open sleigh on a day when the outdoor workers had refused to work on account of the intense cold. It was then dangerous travelling as one or two of the stations were thirty to forty miles apart, and if a "borran" or blizzard happens to catch the traveller in between them the chances are he will be lost and frozen to death.

Many a time in my travels have I wakened up some poor peasants in the middle of the night, both summer and winter, but I always found them ready to help me. Getting up they would bustle round to get the Samovar going, on top of which I would, if winter, put my frozen piece of meat and bread to thaw. I have often said that what one suffers from in winter time in Siberia is the heat more than the cold. These peasants' houses are airless, and heated beyond endurance, and yet one will see them huddled up over their huge Russian stoves, regular Salamanders! The windows are double; every crevice is pasted over with brown paper; the doors are doubled and fitted with felt to keep out any draught; so the atmosphere inside may be imagined.

On my first trip in winter when in one of these huts I could stand the heat no longer and went outside very early in the morning to get a breath of fresh air. Now the house was domed right over with snow, and only the smoke revealed its presence; a snow tunnel led out of it and near the entrance I saw what I thought to be three beautiful, shaggy-looking dogs; I actually tried to entice them to come up to me, but as I advanced towards them they slunk back to the top of the dome. One of the occupants of the house came out, but ran back for his gun directly he saw them, while the moment they saw it they went off at a bound; daylight was only just dawning and they were soon lost to view; the sequel proved they were not friendly dogs but wolves!

At one point on this same journey I was wondering when we should come to a human habitation; we pulled up, and I asked the driver how many versts we still had to go before coming to one; then he kept pointing downwards, and I found we were actually on top of a house! This was my first introduction to houses under the snow. At the mines the stables for about fifty camels and forty horses with their waggons, carriages, and stablemen's quarters were all under the snow. To build one, strong posts were first erected, then stringers placed from one to the other, and a network made of them; over this was placed brushwood; then when the snow came it domed right over this structure; and for five or six months all lived thus beneath a snow-covering, with long, broad, tunnel-ways leading down to it.

In winter one finds that in Moscow all wheels give place to runners, and some of the sleighs belonging to the wealthy—with their rich, fur rugs, and occupants encased in the most magnificent furs—were almost an appalling sight, since the contrast to the poorer classes in their none too-warm garments was too great. But in Russia such extremes of wealth and poverty are the normal condition

of its people ; there are comparatively few between these two classes ; it is in this respect very similar to Mexico.

In Warsaw I found myself one day in the slums ; curiosity led me on, and when I began to return I really doubted if I should ever get out alive. In all my travels I have never seen so degraded a class as I met there. Mostly Polish Jews, they did not look human ; their furtive, sly glances—their degenerate-looking countenances—their whole physical aspect, were almost terrifying, not from the fear of violence but from the thought that humanity could have reached so degraded a state as the result of centuries of oppression. As I looked upon them and thought that they were once God's chosen people and were now *Lo Ammi*, "not my people," the truth of their old prophecies was forcibly brought home to me. Scattered to the four winds of heaven, amongst every tongue and people and nation—hated and despised by the Gentile—"A Nation, yet not a Nation," and "scattered to the four winds of heaven," accurately describes them to-day.

Of late the papers have discussed whether they are a nation. Their own prophecy quoted above, written about 2,500 years ago, is the answer. I am told that in Rumania their condition is even worse. As one looks at the Russian and Polish Jews one asks what extraordinary vitality is there in these people that has enabled them to survive their persecutions, and to produce some of the cleverest men in Europe—painters, musicians, physicians, scientific men, and bankers ? "An amazement and wonderment !" Certain it is they pull the purse strings of the world !

## CHAPTER LXIV

### TO ATBASAR COPPER MINES, SIBERIA

THE Atbasar mines were about 300 miles distant, in a direct line to the west of the Spassky Copper mines, but it was about 650 miles by road. They were large copper mines which were subsequently amalgamated under the same directorship and management. My first visit to these latter mines at a later period took me down to a part of the Russian Empire which I had not visited previously. The route lay by the southern line running to Tashkend, instead of by the Siberian line, and the latter part of the railway journey ran along the northern shore of the Sea of Aral and into Turkestan.

I stepped off at Fort No. 2, an old military outpost station of the country; here we had our agent and a depôt which held supplies and machinery for the mine. In the small adjacent town one felt as if suddenly transported to the east. It was the height of summer; the heat was great, and the sandy barren nature of the country around added to it; but it was the flat-roofed houses and the population found here that gave the place its Eastern character. Amidst its bazaars were numerous Saarts—they are found throughout Tashkend and Bokhara, and are very Indian-like in features, with strong evidences of Semitic origin depicted in their physiognomies—quite a few Indian traders, Afghans, Persians, and many Khirgese and Tartars. In the bazaars Persian carpets, Eastern jewellery, beads and trinkets were the principal articles of sale. The different dresses representative of the many Eastern peoples gathered here added to the brightness of the scene. Russian wares were also in evidence but to a much less degree. Here one found the East meeting the West; though on a small scale, it was emblematic of what was going on in the Russian Empire on a large scale.

Now although the mine had sent a motor car for me, I determined to go by camel-cart, as I wanted to explore a new trail that had then just been discovered between here and the mine where it was reported that some good wells had been struck. The distance to the mine was about 250 miles, two-thirds of which I had to cover by this mode of conveyance. Sending the car back I arranged that it should return on the sixth day to the point where the new trail joined the present road, and there pick me up. My caravan con-



sisted of three camel-carts, each just large enough for the occupant to lie down comfortably, with a cover made of sailcloth as a protection from the sun, and drawn by a couple of camels. Accompanying me was a young Englishman from the mine who had picked up the Khirgese language, and a young Russian. With a plentiful supply of provisions, some camp cooking-pots, water-melons, cucumbers, and a barrel of drinking-water we set out one night at 1 a.m. As an example of pioneering-work I jot down the following itinerary copied from an old letter written on our journey when mapping out a trace for a new road.

*First day.*—We trekked from 1 a.m. to 6.45 a.m. and covered thirty-three versts, when we came on our first picket. This first trek had been a hard one, being mostly over loosely-packed sand and up a very gradual ascent all the way. Interspersed over this desert-country were small tufts of "Jusan," a dry, rooty-looking scrub; but, dry as its appearance was, it made a very excellent and nutritious foodstuff for the camels, and served also for camp fires. At this station we found a fair water-supply, enough for 300 head of cattle at a time and a good feed all round. After watering our camels and trekking till noon (another twenty versts) we stopped until 3.10 p.m., and then going on at 5 p.m. we came on a party of Russians and Khirgese at work, grubbing up and clearing the "Jusan" from the trail. Continued till 10 p.m., having made seventy-nine versts from Fort No. 2. After camping and getting our evening-meal it was past midnight.

*Second day.*—We were up at 3 a.m., breakfasted and trekked a 6 a.m., travelled till 10.15 a.m. when we came on water and good feed in a donga near, where we allowed our camels to feed out until 1 p.m. Five versts further on we came on a fine well of water and plenty of grass, so halted until 3.45 p.m.; ten or twelve versts still further on we came on more wells, and at 7.45 p.m. camped. We had been moving along the top of a narrow table-land down either side of which we looked into a dry desert-valley.

*Third day.*—We were up at 3 a.m., fed our camels, breakfasted and trekked at 7 a.m., and half-an-hour later came on good water and grass in a donga. At 11 a.m. the heat was so great we camped. A little below our camp we discovered a fine spring of cold water. Our progress was slow, for as we went along we had to stop and make mounds to mark the trail we were picking out for the new road; this was done by some ten Khirgese who accompanied us. At 3 p.m. we inspanned and continued. Towards dusk we sighted a wolf which kept ahead of us. At 7 p.m. we camped. A high wind which sprang up was cooling after the excessive heat of this

desert-country, but was not conducive to cooking or eating, as the sand over-peppered our food.

*Fourth day.*—Up at 1.45 a.m. feeding out our camels, baking bread; inspanned 4.30 a.m. At seven versts out we struck splendid running springs of water, halted an hour, came on sand grouse—the first signs of game we have seen in the country. At 9.40 a.m. we camped near some Khirgese graves or “Mogilas.” These formed curious objects built of sun-dried brick; a group of these tombs looked in the distance like a small village. Finding water here we camped and made it our seventh station, some 229 versts from Fort No. 2. (A verst is two-thirds of a mile.)

*Fifth day.*—Up at 2 a.m. and trekked soon afterwards. Leaving the narrow plateau we descended about 100 feet into a desert-valley, which we crossed, and then we re-ascended to the top of another and similar plateau; trekked till sundown, finding indications of water which we made station No. 8. Camped noon and explored round.

*Sixth day.*—We were up 2.30 a.m., breakfasted, and trekked 4.30 a.m. until 6.30 a.m. when we fell on the old road and there found the car awaiting us.

The route we had come was a much better watered one than the old one; at each of the eight stations where we had found water, arrangements were made to erect a small, sun-dried, brick post-station, and for hay stocks to be gathered in; thus a regular system of connecting links for the transport of stores, etc, would be established, and this, too, on a road that only required to be “grubbed up.” My English companion though used to the heat, had been somewhat overcome by it, and was rather knocked up, so the sight of the car was welcome.

Our young Russian—who always kept wonderfully clean and smart for such a trip—had a very unpleasant experience on a former one, when a camel, walking up to the cart in which he was lying down, put his head in and emptied the whole contents of his inside over him, and he had to trek for thirty versts before coming to water. I told him the camel resented seeing such a dandy in its vicinity. He, poor fellow, suffered not only from this horrible exhibition of the camel’s displeasure, but afterwards from the amount of chaff he had to endure on his return to camp.

Those days and nights out in the desert were spent in the midst of the most intense silence, for not a sound of animal or insect life was to be heard, and the quiet formed a strong contrast to the teeming life and sounds of the Malay jungle from which I had come not long since.

A hundred versts' ride brought me to the mine, and on my arrival there I found quite a group of my countrymen, some with their wives, living here in this outpost, removed far from any village or town ; the nearest village, namely Fort No. 2., was 250 miles distant to the south, and the nearest town, Atbasar, was even a little further distant to the north.

Here a very large deposit of copper-ore had been opened up by shafts and levels, and further proved by most extensive diamond-boring. Fifty miles away we visited the site for the future Smelting Works, and fifty miles further on the coal-mines. Since then a railway has been nearly completed between these points and large smelting works have been about two-thirds completed while, three villages with their school-houses, hospitals, offices, bath-houses, workmen's houses and staff-quarters have been erected, and twice during the war have I visited them.

From here, after a very close investigation, the General Manager and myself started in a motor car for the Spassky Mines, a distance of 650 miles. For the first 350 miles there was not a house on the way ; it was always a dangerous journey, for fear of a break-down so far from anywhere. In the journeys I have made over this route we have had some narrow shaves from disaster. Once especially, when a sudden snowstorm, the first of the season, overtook us, and in a short time obliterated the road. Luckily we came across the fresh trail of camels, and following them up they led us to a Khirgese kind of dug-out where their riders had taken refuge ; and here, without a fire, we were huddled into one room from 3. p.m. one day till 10 a.m. the next, when the storm abated.

Then, some sixty versts away, we ran into a big snow-filled hole, and—after many ineffectual attempts to dig the car out, when we had given up all hope of doing so—I proposed to make one more and final effort. Luckily it was successful. Soon afterwards, as we were then travelling south, we ran out of the snow. Between the Mine and Atbasar is the old village of Oulataff now only in ruins ; its walls still stand, surrounding it, as do those of its church. This village, some fifty years or so ago, was the advance-guard of Russian civilization—Cossack built ; but all the Cossacks were driven out of it by the Khirgese when it had to be abandoned.

As we made these trips the Khirgese met with on the road would try to race the car, and their look of blank amazement to find it passing their swift horses was curious to behold. In the summer there are many camps of these people, especially along a line of lakes passed en route ; they were very picturesque, with their Yurtas pitched and thousands of cattle, horses, sheep and camels

feeding in the vicinity, but later on in the season they would all be gone and this part of the steppes left bare and desolate.

In one of these Yurtas we stopped for a couple of hours' rest. Our host was the head of the camp and the owner of the herds around. The Yurta was a large and commodious one, built like the rest (*i.e.* a low, dome-shaped tent covered with thick felt made from the hair of these camels), while inside it was lined with an unusual amount of Turkish-like embroidery, some of which was remarkable for the excellence of its workmanship. A magnificent Persian carpet covered the ground, and on it his three wives, to whom we had been introduced, spread sumptuous pillows on which we reclined. Of these ladies two were passé, while the third was quite young with very oval features, and was, I suppose, considered a beauty. She was the mother of a little boy about two years old of whom our venerable host was very proud, holding him in his arms most of the time we stayed there. Every now and again a horseman would come in at full gallop, dismount, and wait outside the Yurta until the Chief went out to him, and after a short parley would mount his steed and be off again. We arranged with our host whilst here to organize a post between our two mines at a fixed rate per month during the summer months of the year.

Koumiss, or mare's milk slightly fermented, was handed to us, after which coffee and sweetmeats were brought in. The Yurta was pitched just on the side of the lake and our host's great herds of cattle were to be seen as far as the eye would carry. A more peaceful pastoral-picture could scarcely be imagined. We were evidently honoured guests, for it rarely occurs that strangers are introduced to the unveiled wives.

## CHAPTER XLV

### TRANSBAIKAL AND SAGHALIN

A MORE extended visit made by me during these years in the Russian Empire was to the Primorski Provinces, or those provinces in Far Eastern Siberia, which were ruled over by a Governor, whose seat was at Khabarovka, their capital on the Amur river. Khabarovka, again, is connected by a railway about 280 miles in length with the Siberian railway running almost north and south at right angles to it, which joins it at Nikolskoye about seventy miles north of Vladivostok. The railway runs, for the greater part of its length, through the rich Usuri valley, through which flows the river of that name emptying itself into the Amur a little above the capital. This valley is the most populated and prosperous part of these provinces, and Vladivostok and the capital are mainly dependent upon it for their food supplies. Khabarovka is about half-way up the Amur between Nikolaievsk at its mouth and the large town of Blagovieschensk.

The Governor of this latter town during the Russo-Japanese war brought infamy on the name of the Russian Government by his massacre of its Chinese inhabitants. The Chinese part of the town was on the side of the river opposite to the Russian part. The Chinese were accused of firing across the river on the Russian town. The Governor encircled their town with troops, and systematically every morning crowds of men, women, and children were collected and marched off through the lines to the river-edge, on the pretext of being removed to the Russian town; instead, however, at the point of the bayonet they were driven into the river, and drowned. It is said that after the war, the circumstances having come to the ears of the Czar, this infamous governor was degraded.

A few incidents connected with this trip may be of interest. Leaving Vladivostok, accompanied by my firm's agent, who acted as interpreter, and who proved a most enjoyable companion, and travelling in the direction of the Corean frontier, whose hills were in sight of our camp, we passed a large Russian military camp with troops all under canvas. These tents, I noticed, were surrounded by well-dug trenches, the earth from which had been thrown up and stamped down; and on this earth were pitched the

tents, their floors being raised thus well above the general ground-level.

About ten miles distant from the camp, at the mouth of the river Tuman, I came on a very large log-house with very massive doors. In this were stored the army clothing and accoutrements. Between it and the sea was a small, mud-built house. Here I stayed when coming and going from our camp. Its occupants were a Russian family and a few Corean and Chinese labourers. My bed was formed out of a couple of planks on two low trestles.

One night, before retiring to my cosy couch, I pulled off my top-boots and put them at the foot of it. Waking early I heard loud voices ; sitting up and looking through the window, I saw that the whole country around was one sheet of water ; the river had overflowed, water was pouring into the room, and before I could pull on my boots the water was over their tops. Going outside the house I found a ladder had been placed to give access to the roof, and not one of these people would go up before me ! There was no time to lose, so up I went and the rest, carrying children, followed me up. I was momentarily afraid of two things—first, lest the whole house would be carried away,—secondly, lest we might all fall through its frail roof.

Rain was falling in torrents and the water sweeping past us. Hour after hour we sat and shivered ; it was very cold. At 11 a.m. suddenly that great Russian store went down with a bang, and was instantly swept away. It was impossible our house could stand the flood, I thought ; but I was wrong, for about 2 p.m. the rain ceased and the waters commenced to subside as suddenly as they had arisen. By 6 p.m. we were again on terra-firma. The Chinese collected some wreckage of dead wood and got a fire going in the little kitchen. We were all dreadfully cold and drenched to the skin, and everyone disrobed ; there was no modesty left in any of us ; there we stood, all of us in Adam's garb, wringing out the water from our clothes, and then hanging them up on lines to dry before the fire. Our want of modesty enabled us at all events to lie down in fairly dry clothes that night. One could not help remarking how, at the moment of danger, these people, composed of three different races, all insisted I should go up the ladder first, and how cheerful they were on top of that roof when it looked almost a certainty that we should all be swept away into the sea.

We witnessed a very pretty sight when on top of the roof—that of a junk, which came full-sail into the river from the sea ; but as they let go an anchor a little above us I was alarmed to see her turn right over and be swept away to sea with her crew of six Chinese and

Russians clinging to her. The sea was very rough and broke everywhere in one foam of surf. Next morning our surprise was great when another junk sailed in with all the six men safely on board. All of us had given them up for lost.

At another time, some two days' steaming up the coast from Vladivostok, I visited some iron-mines a few miles in from Olga Bay. Never shall I forget our ride out to them in an old hay-cart ; so great was the jolting that we had to hang on tightly to avoid being thrown out. The sun, too, was as hot as I have ever experienced elsewhere. But it was not this that left so lasting an impression on me, it was the wealth of wild flowers ; never anywhere have I seen colour in such stretches and so varied. It was a gorgeous spectacle, well worth the fatigue of the journey and the heat endured in examining those large, iron-stone outcrops which was like walking over the top of a furnace. My interpreter and I stayed at Olga in a Russian peasant's house, where a very entertaining old lady cooked for us and looked after our creature-comforts.

We crossed to the island of Saghalin, as we spell it, to a place called Pilliavo ; it is just within the Russian boundary-line, on the fiftieth parallel which separates it from the southern or Japanese half of the island ; for it will be remembered that the southern half was taken from Russia by the Japanese in the Russo-Japanese war. Here I found a lumber camp run by Australians, and the coal-mining camp which I had come to inspect and of which an old foreman of mine was in charge. All the island's inhabitants, with the exception of the military and civil authorities, are made up of murderers, so that every Russian employed belonged to this class of criminal. A few Chinese coolies, imported for the mines only, must be excepted. Now the factotum of our camp was a Russian who had twenty murders against his account, for there was at that time no capital punishment in Russia. This man, a year before the Russo-Japanese war, murdered his twentieth victim—a Russian officer—for the sake of the uniform. This he donned and in it escaped to the mainland. It is still more remarkable that he crossed Siberia in it ; eventually he was caught as he turned up at his own native village in the Caucasus, and was again brought back. These criminals are allowed to settle as squatters in the island, and, strange to say, a murder is seldom heard of amongst them.

The coal-mines here, in a prospecting stage of development, had lost a steam-launch, wrecked on the beach, a few miles down the coast ; as no one had been to inspect her, I wanted to do so myself in order to see if her boilers or engines were worth saving. I asked for a guide, as one could not go by the foreshore but had to take

a trail through the forest at the back, full of morasses ; hence the necessity for some one to lead me through them. To my astonishment my old foreman brought this factotum forward ; " No," I said, " tell him straight I don't want to give him the chance of making me his number twenty-one victim." This was told him and he only laughed.

A little before I landed here a Russian naval boat with a Chaplain and a few women on board had called in, when the unmarried, criminal Russians were told to select wives ; they were to do this in order of their seniority—whether by age or the number of their murders, I did not ask—and the chaplain then married them off. The factotum was one of them, and his new wife, a woman of about forty-two years of age, had five murders against her account ; but both lived on apparently excellent terms with each other.

Between Piliavo and Nikolaievsk I paid a visit to " Dui " in the neighbourhood of which there were other coal-mines, all worked by murderers. In the government-owned one at Dui, I saw the old wheelbarrows with chains still attached to them to which, previous to the Russo-Japanese war, the prisoners used to be fastened. The foreman told me they used to live underground and were rarely brought to surface. He showed me his bare back, a sorry sight, the scars of which he said were all received from the blows of Cossack whips in their march across Siberia. " That," said he, " was the agonizing time of my life ; once here we were never worked hardly and were rarely beaten ; we were, too, well-fed, and had nothing to complain of save our chains and the fact that we seldom saw daylight." At the time I met him he was a free man and being paid a fair wage, and was living in quite a decent cottage near the mine.

Between Olga Bay and Nikolaievsk I examined some zinc-mines on the mainland, twenty-five miles inland, to which a light railway was being built. Here I spent a very pleasant and interesting time. The Manager was a German and the mine was under German and Russian auspices, and the ores were being shipped all the way to Hamburg. I stayed with the manager and his wife who were living in a nice house ; but the crowd of miners were a fairly rough lot made up largely of Russian criminals escaped from Saghalin, and of Chinese coolies.

Just after I left the Russians struck for higher pay and, as the manager refused to pay them, they put him in a barrel, and carried him up in it to the top of a pinnacle that stands out just above the mine, like a great sentinel, and down one side of which is a sheer drop of many hundreds of feet. Here they planted the barrel with



the manager still in it, close to the edge, and gave him the choice of being rolled over it or agreeing to a higher rate of pay. There was no alternative but to agree. He returned to his house, and when the accountant—a fiery, little red-haired Russian—heard what had happened, he rushed out with a couple of revolvers in his hands and shot down several of the strikers ; but they overpowered him by stoning him and left him for dead. In the night the Manager brought him in and hid him up in the roof. Though unconscious and badly hurt he recovered and was taken away to Vladivostok, but I was told he never would again be fit for anything.

Soon after this Cossacks arrived and expelled the Russians, and Chinese coolies took their place. Now in the old Chinese village the head of each family and every single man paid a rouble per month to the Hung Hussees who had penetrated to these parts. The newcomers refused to do this, whereupon the Hung Hussees raided the village and cut off the heads of those who had refused to pay. Since then things have gone on quietly, and the mine has further opened up in depth into a valuable zinc and lead one.

A trip up the Amur river from Nikolaievsk at its mouth to Khabarovka—three days by steamer—was a picnic, of which the predominating feature left on my mind is that of salmon, and salmon as our main diet. Salmon was piled upon our decks, salmon at every village we came to was brought on board in a salted and dried state in large quantities. I could not get away from salmon ; it was salmon, salmon, day and night ; the ship, villages, and everywhere reeked of it. Khabarovka stands on a high bank above the great Amur river. A very prominent feature of it is a fine bronze statue mounted on a high granite pedestal representing the Cossack General, explorer and conqueror of the Russian Far East. I had to see the Governor here in connection with certain business matters ; he was a very big man in these parts, but though I was quite a stranger to him he was most kind in inviting me to his house.

In some of the places I visited in these regions there is a kind of bush-fly, about the size of our house-fly, which breeds in enormous quantities. In consequence the inhabitants are obliged to wear mosquito netting over their heads, and gauntlets or mittens of the same material. I had sent some Russians on to one Camp before me, but though they were more or less used to the flies they had to clear out of it, for the flies made it simply impossible, and my visit had to be foregone.

In Vladivostok I enjoyed much hospitality from a Russian family of whose kindness I have ever a happy remembrance.

On one of my several visits to this town, when staying at the hotel

one night, I suddenly heard a loud rapping at my door. One switch of the electric light was off and I was seeking in the dark for the other one, when those outside began to force my door open. I quickly unlocked it and threw it wide open ; there stood before me a Captain and about ten to twelve soldiers with bayonets fixed and holding candles. Five or six of them entered my room and searched it, but forgot the large wardrobe which was the only place where anyone might have been hidden. I had to give my name and address, and, after turning out my baggage and rummaging over my papers, they withdrew. Next morning I heard that the whole hotel had been searched for a Russian lady supposed to be a revolutionary. This was the only time I ever met with anything like impolite treatment from a Russian official, for my Captain-friend of the night was very rude and offensive in his manner.

In Harbin, where I was staying at another time, an amusing incident occurred, which again showed how differently the East views things from the West. It was just at this time that the great economic value of the Soy-bean, so largely cultivated in Manchuria, became known in England, and Agents were being sent out here to enter into contracts with the Chinese for their coming year's crop. One of our most powerful and richest houses sent their agent who deposited with the Russo-Chinese Bank the equivalent of £100,000 as an indication to the Chinese farmers of their wealth. On the other hand the old firm of J.M. & Company, of China, sent their agent up without any deposit. The most influential and largest growers forthwith came to the conclusion that a firm who could deposit so large a sum of money and let it lie idle for several months at only a small rate of interest, could not be a very business-like one, or else that they had some hidden trap ; consequently for that year no business ensued between these growers and that firm ; whereas the word of the Agent of J.M. & Company was sufficient, the reputation of the firm being well-established, and very large contracts were entered into with them.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

### RUSSIA AND SIBERIA, 1915.

IN 1915 I was again in Russia from September until just on the close of the year, when I returned to England. On my return I sent the Editor of the *Mining Magazine* an article giving my impressions of my visit. This article, from which I will give an extract, was published in the January number for 1916.

“Towards the end of August I left England on a visit of inspection to the Spassky and Atbasar Copper Mines in Central Siberia. As the usual route by Berlin was closed it was necessary to cross the North Sea to Bergen, thence to Christiania, and on to Stockholm. From there the route takes you to the North of Sweden, and across the boundary line into Finland at Tornea, which is about thirty Swedish miles South of the Arctic circle. Passing thence through Finland to Petrograd, the journey from England was completed in seven days.

“At Tornea I saw the first impressions of the war, as there I met a large contingent of the wounded German prisoners of war, who being unfit for any further military duties were being returned through Sweden to Germany. The Red Cross train in which they arrived at Tornea, on the Russian side, was excellently fitted up and well-officered with orderlies and nurses, and evidently everything possible was being done for them. In Petrograd the number of wounded appeared to be great, but not until I arrived in Moscow later did I fully realize the enormous number of wounded men.

It seemed to me that in Petrograd they were trying to hide the evidences of war as much as possible, as the contrast between the two cities was so great. In Petrograd, again, one's environment was that of pessimism; in Moscow quite the contrary. In the former, everything was on the surface gay and going on much as usual, but underneath there was a deep dread of the Germans, and a fear that ultimately the Germans would be in Petrograd. At the time it looked very much as if Riga must fall, but now for over three months the Russians have been able to hold the Germans, and have even pushed them back from their most advanced lines of attack, so that it looks, from the present point of view, as if Riga has been saved. In Moscow an appalling sight confronted the traveller. The number of hospitals was enormous, for almost every large

block of buildings had been converted to this use. . . . .

“ At the time when I arrived the refugees, old men, women, and children from Poland and Galicia, were pouring in, not by hundreds only but by thousands—one of the saddest sights you can conceive. At the four large railway-stations crowds were continually arriving, while upon every available space on the platforms, in the stations, and outside in the porticoes, these people had taken up their residence. Along the lines for miles on the sidings were freight cars crammed with them, forty people on an average being in a car. Most of them stood up in the clothes they happened to be wearing when they fled. Some had bundles, but the majority were without any at all. A large number wore their summer clothes, and as it was already getting cold their sufferings can be easily imagined. None of these people had anything given them to eat but a loaf of rye bread per day. The first hot meal they had had for weeks, in some cases months, was supplied by the English community, who organized travelling soup-kitchens which were sent round to three of the railway-stations.

“I was at one of the stations when a soup-kitchen arrived for the first time. It was difficult to make the people understand that by going out into the street they could get a litre of good hot soup and an extra loaf of bread. They could scarcely believe in such kindness as apparently they had experienced nothing of the sort except in a few isolated cases of Charity. As far as I could ascertain, where Russian charity had provided them with more than their share of rye bread, it had been in the form of cold sausages. The English community's charity in this respect was more an object-lesson as to how to organize relief, than as to the amount they dispensed. The Russians themselves are a sympathetic people, but are not good at organization when left to initiate it themselves. Hence there was nothing being done for these refugees in the way of giving them hot food.

“ The Russian Central Moscow Committee was, nevertheless, working hard to do what they could, but after all it was but a little that could be done. Their efforts mainly consisted in seeking quarters or shelters of some sort for these people, and the contribution of bread and cold sausage. The poor women and children, without their husbands or fathers, and the old men, were all pathetically patient. No complaints were to be heard, but on their sad faces suffering was to be seen. So many of the mothers had lost their children, and there were multitudes of children without mothers or other protectors. In the morning alone they collected, when I was there, 1,000 babies from small girls who were mothering them.

Their stories of woe, and of how they had been treated, could only be dragged out of them. They seemed apathetic and to have lost their vitality. It is difficult to describe a throng of this kind, but when you see it for yourself it brings forcibly before you all the horrors of war even more than by seeing the maimed and wounded soldiers.

“Some of their stories were too horrible to write about, and from what we could ascertain they corroborated each other when traced to the districts from which they came. In some cases, apparently, the commander of the German troops had held his men in check and simply driven the people away, or the people had fled on their own account. In others the Commanders must have been friends, as they had allowed both men and officers to go on a drunken orgy. So that you can picture to yourself what awful horrors the refugees experienced.

“Later, on the Siberian line I met these people still travelling in freight-cars, all bunched together to keep each other warm; they were being gradually distributed to the villages throughout Siberia. On my return, having crossed the country from Omsk to Tashkend in Central Asia, about three months later, I saw the same freight-trains of human beings passing at the rate of eight a day with forty carriages to a train. At each of the larger stations, three or four corpses were being removed each day. As the severe winter had already begun, I do not know how the people managed to exist, but the Russians are a hardy race. Our own peasant-class would soon die under such hardships. Although the majority of the refugees were peasants, among them were a good sprinkling of the better class of people. . . .

“On my way out to Omsk I visited one of the large prison-camps at Tumen. Each camp contained ten thousand prisoners of war. At Tumen we found that the Commandant had been, up to the outbreak of war, one of the principal Russian employées at Spassky. The prisoners were confined in a large, fenced-in compound, containing a row of twenty large huts, each accommodating 500 men, and each hut was furnished with large Russian stoves and thereby kept well warmed. In their stores they had large supplies of overcoats lined with cotton-wool; each man had one, together with a scarf which I should call a shawl; there were, also, large stocks of well-made boots, socks, and underlinen. Their bakeries were producing as good a bread as you would find in any first-class hotel. The camp, too, was supplied with hot water, which is more than can be said of our soldiers' camps at home. Their food, I consider, was not only nutritious but excellent in quality. In addition they

have large, Russian baths which are built on the lines of a Turkish bath, the hot rooms being of a vapoury heat instead of a dry one. The Austrians were allowed to go into the towns and villages to work, receiving one shilling per day in cash, and one shilling credited to them, which they will get at the end of the war if the Germans are proved to be treating their prisoners better than in the past. Until recently they only received five pence in cash and seven pence on credit at the stores, to buy extras. The German prisoners were formerly allowed to go out to work, but were brought back again as they behaved so badly. I told the Commandant that I thought Russian sympathy towards the Austrians and their hatred of the Germans had made the difference, but he assured me, on his word of honour, that, after making the fullest investigations, he found that the Germans had behaved to the unprotected women folk in the villages in the most atrocious way, while, save in sporadic cases, this did not happen with the Austrians. At Omsk the prison-camps were a copy of that at Tumen."

At the risk of some repetition I give a somewhat fuller account of our visit to two other prison-camps at Omsk, my excuse being that at some future date any additional light thrown on this subject may be of value.

Each of the prisoner camps consisted of a number of large, wooden-built barracks, situated in a very large compound which was simply fenced around. There were twenty of these barracks, placed alongside each other, built of logs and boarded inside and out with a packing of sawdust to fill up the intervening crevices in order to keep the house warm; all, too, had double doors and double windows (also to help keep them warm) beside which were a number of great, big, Russian stoves to heat them in winter. In the centre of each of these houses a number of platforms were built, leaving alley-ways to pass along between them. The platforms ran down the length of the building, in two tiers, one above the other. On these platforms the men slept, much as they would on board an emigrant ship, but with a larger area of bunk-room than on the latter so that there was room enough to place their boxes alongside them.

Those who were industrious bought sacking and made themselves mattresses; those who were not, slept on the bare boards. At the end of the house were lavatories for the men to wash in; two long rows of iron troughs were placed one above the other; in the upper ones were rows of small taps so arranged that a man standing opposite one of them let the water flow out over his head as he washed himself beneath it, while the waste water ran away into the lower trough—a very clean arrangement where a number of men

had to wash at the same time. Hot and cold water were laid on to the upper trough so that if the weather were cold the water fed to it could be regulated to any temperature. Then there was a large Russian bath-house, with its hot and cooling rooms, and bath rooms.

We also visited the hospital, equipped with iron bedsteads ; but as no one was ill there was no one inside it except one man just leaving, a convalescent. Then we visited the cook-house, one to every two barracks. As each barrack contained five hundred men, that meant there was one cook-house to every thousand men. We also inspected the bakery—one only for the ten thousand men in camp. Each man received a little over two pounds, or a kilo, of rye bread per day, so ten tons (short) of bread were baked every day in the bakery. On feast days,—and there were many in Russia,—they had white bread. We ate some of the rye and white bread, and found it quite sweet and really good, and better than the bread we had been getting en route at the railway stations. We also partook of their soup, which was composed of potatoes, cabbage, and one quarter of a pound of beef for each man. The Russians made a very good soup out of these ingredients and called it “ Stchee ” ; it was excellent and quite tasty. Then we tasted their porridge, which was also very good, but, unlike ours, made out of barley instead of oatmeal ; it was cooked usually with a little fat in it, but as fat was scarce they were here using butter instead. Tea and sugar the prisoners bought themselves, and boiling water was turned on at certain taps at stated times in order to allow them to make their tea.

We visited their clothes-stores, and also their Canteen where they bought cakes, sweets, cigarettes, tea, sugar, etc., etc. The Government supplied them all with clothes and boots, also with a greatcoat a-piece thickly padded with cotton, and a scarf. They were allowed to work in the camp or on farms, in the streets, buildings, or wharves, and were paid for their work at the usual rate of pay of 2s. per day ; 1s. 3d. per day was the cost of keeping each man, 1s. was kept back and was to be given to them at the end of the war, if the Germans had done something similar for their Russian prisoners, and 1s. was given them. Of this 1s., 5d. might be in cash, and anything above it was placed to their credit to buy extras in the way of clothing, etc. All might have work and get paid for it thus, if they liked, but only about half cared to do so. Anyway, they had the chance to make a little money and get paid for it on a fair basis, and if they wished to live a little better they could do so.

They all had a bath once a fortnight, half were glad, the other half had to be forced into it. They might play games but not cards ;

or they might smoke, but not in or near the wooden houses. There were prisoners' cells, light and airy, and the usual highest punishment here was twenty days in one on cold food. The next heaviest was twenty days in one, and hot food only every third day. In addition there was a large room used just to detain prisoners sentenced to confinement for a few days. Their principal faults were playing cards, smoking in the houses, and, worst of all, selling their boots and clothes to the Russian peasants, stealing again from each other.

As at Tumen the Germans were given work in the camps only and were not allowed go to out to farms or into the town to work. The Austrians might be seen everywhere in squads of ten; you might see twenty to a hundred or more, even up to two hundred, with only one Russian soldier to each squad. No one noticed them as they worked on buildings or in the wharves; in fact they might have been part of the people themselves. They looked very fit and well; a few wounded ones, now recovered, looked pale and weakly; but, taken generally, all appeared to be fit. They were somewhat dejected, and home-sick, poor things, I expect, though many said that after the war they wanted to stay and settle down in Siberia.

Now I have given a fairly good description of how these prisoners of war were treated in Siberia, and it will be seen that not only were they well-looked after, but could improve their own position if they chose to work. Formerly they got three-quarters of a pound of meat and three pounds of bread per day, tea and sugar, but as the Germans treated their Russian prisoners so badly, this allowance was reduced to one quarter of a pound of meat and two pounds of bread (or a kilo) per day per man. It was quite enough to keep them well and fit, but not luxuriously so.

In these Omsk camps of twenty thousand we found much the same conditions, but they were not as clean or as well looked after as the Tumen camp, though quite good. Instead of twenty prison cells per ten thousand they had thirty, and of these fifteen were dark ones. The very heaviest punishment here heard of was one of eight days on cold food in a dark cell. With this difference the several camps were all run on much the same lines, and were built on the same plan, and brought under the same regulations.

The prisoners, I consider, were very kindly and considerably treated. They were far, far better off than the poor Russian refugees who were fleeing for their lives, and who had lost all they ever had, and but too often had as their sole possession in this world the clothes they stood in. The Russians were kind to their enemies for not even an angry look did one see directed against the prisoners



as they passed to and fro in the streets. In Akmolinsk, where a number of German officers—prisoners—were confined, they appeared to us to be living almost as independent gentlemen. In Tashkend we saw the German and Austrian prisoners driving about in droskies everywhere, day and night ; save for their uniform they might have been mistaken for Russian officers.

I will quote again from the same article already referred to :

“ From Omsk we went up the Irtysh river two days, and called at Ekibostus, where they were erecting large zinc-smelting works ; from there I went on to Spassky (to find things less upset by the mobilization than I expected, but still upset by it) and from there to the Atbasar mines. The journey from Spassky to Atbasar, which in summer-time can be done in two-and-a-half days, took us six days, so you may imagine we had a hard trip over a distance of 650 miles. At Atbasar some of our young men wanted to be allowed to come home to join the army, and I was able to arrange that they should. From there we made for the Tashkend line of railway about 250 miles distant, and, after a short visit to Tashkend itself, we left for Moscow, meeting, as already recorded, the refugee trains en route.

“ At Moscow I found they had about eight hundred thousand refugees under shelter, though many were still sleeping in the open, notwithstanding the cold. Over fifty per cent. of the wounded are commonly reported as being in Moscow. The city is one huge hospital. One thing above all others that the Russians have done is to effect a magnificent organization of the Red Cross. Russia is full of anomalies. The Red Cross organization is an apparent contradiction to everything else in Russia. . . . The trouble with Russia is that, as she has so many thousands upon thousands of German extraction, it is almost impossible to deal with this element of the population. . . . The only centre where there is a feeling of pessimism is Petrograd itself, where reactionary German influences are great.

“ On my way home I passed through Sweden and Norway, and found those of the Swedes I met largely pro-German, while similarly the Norwegians were pro-English. But all expressed their opinion that Germany ultimately would win, as they say Germany utilizes the best brains of the country, while England “ muddles,” by her admixture of incapables with those who would be capable if left to act by themselves. In conversation they admit that we have even better brains than the Germans, but they hold that our form of Government does not permit of their best use.

“ I have forgotten to mention one thing, and that is perhaps the most marvellous of the whole. Russia, I always used to set down

as the most drunken nation in the world—owing, probably, to the cheapness of their vodka—with our nation a good second ; but to-day Russia is the most sober one, and as a whole is a nation without drink of any kind outside Petrograd. In the fashionable hotels in most of the large towns, by squaring the head porter you may be able to get some brought to your bedroom, and also in the clubs ; and among some of the rich there are still stocks in their wine cellars. But nowhere can you openly buy spirits. The people say “ if we drank our soldiers would drink, and drunken soldiers could not beat the Germans.” This alone will give some idea of the magnificent spirit that is pervading the country. Wherever I went I found no trace of anyone drinking (but Petrograd was an exception—there both in the best restaurants and in clubs champagne flowed) and as I travelled away from the railways, 2,200 miles, I saw something of the interior of the country, and everywhere it was the same. In the villages hundreds of miles from the seat of war you will see the peasant-women all working for the war.

“In conclusion, I am sure that in the country taken as a whole there is only one spirit inspiring the nation, namely, the wish to beat Germany at all costs. The only feeling of nervousness is lest Petrograd should succumb to the German influence prevailing among the educated classes.”

Mr. H. C. Woolmer who accompanied me on my journey was Chairman of the British Refugee Relief Committee, Moscow ; and Mr. H. Puzey, the Spassky Company's Agent here, was Treasurer ; - and both worked hard and indefatigably in its service.

Written in 1915 these extracts give my impressions of the Russian situation as it appeared to be at that time, and of how well her war-prisoners were cared for.

It will be noted that Petrograd was even then under the influence of Germanism which has since spread its octopus-like tentacles throughout the length and breadth of that vast Empire, using as its conscious and unconscious agents the extreme left of the Socialist party ; these extremists, now known as Bolsheviks, were originally comprised mainly of the left wing of the Maximalists ; under their sway the lowest type amongst the proletariat has been seduced by promises of free land and utopian conditions of life in the future. Russia, I would emphasize, is a new nation, comparatively speaking ; the mass of the population have not yet become conscious of nationality, and, still in ignorance, centre everything around their village life ; there is no such thing as altruism in the wider meaning of the word. The Czar was their father, and they had a pathetic belief that his influence was all-powerful and beneficial. When this was

overthrown the peasants turned naturally to those leaders who promised them a terrestrial paradise. The Russian is a strange anomaly ; individually he is kind, sympathetic and simple, but inconsistent ; collectively, these qualities are united in a body which is swayed easily by plausible leaders, and led into almost any excess. Strictly speaking, Russia is not a nation, and herein lies the key to a right understanding of her ; any organization that the Allied powers may start to assist her recuperation will be a failure unless this fact is recognized.

## CHAPTER XLVII.

### SIBERIA 1916, KHIRGESE OUTBREAK.

IN the summer of 1916 I was again in Russia. In Moscow I met W. and we journeyed together to Samara and on, by the southern line running to Tashkend, to Fort No. 2, our starting-point for the Atbasar Mines. Here our Russian chauffeur, Buroff, met us with the motor, a Panhard designed especially for the rough roads or trails of the country. Buroff was an old and well-trying servant, a fine, tall specimen of the Russian working-class, from whom I received a warm welcome, for many a hundred mile had he driven me in the past.

His information of the position at the mine was alarming, his report being that the whole camp was in laager ; the Khirgese had broken out and had surrounded the camp, but at the time he left it they had suddenly drawn off, and were marching southwards on a trail leading in our direction ; in order to avoid them he had had to take a big *détour* around them. He reckoned there were about three thousand to four thousand of them. Without any warning they had attacked and driven in some of our Russians who were working on our railway, and it was reported that the two foremen had been killed.

Nevertheless, we decided to make a very early start the following morning and attempt to run through in one day, a distance of two hundred and fifty miles ; so Buroff spent the rest of the day making a very thorough overhaul of the car. We reckoned that if we sighted the main body, we could at the worst turn back or evade them by keeping well off to their flank and getting round them.

We started early and came into the camp at the Smelters soon after dark. Here we learnt that the Khirgese had taken up a position on some rising ground, thirty miles to the south and some ten miles off the road up which we had come. A Cossack Colonel with one hundred Cossacks had opportunely arrived to strengthen a small outpost held near here ; he had marched across the Steppes all the way from Omsk, one thousand miles away.

That evening the Colonel left with his troops for our copper-mine camp, fifty miles distant, there to await another fifty men who were expected with two machine guns.

B., the manager, had succeeded in getting some of our old

Khirgese workmen who had joined the rebels, to come in ; and he explained to them that the Cossacks had machine guns which would mow them down ; but they could not believe so impossible a yarn ! They claimed that they were better horsemen, had better horses, and could use their lances better than the Cossacks, and were not afraid of ten times their number. From them we learnt that they were forced to join their clan and obey their chiefs, and that the Khirgese had no animus against the English, only the Russians.

On the other side of us were the coal mines, fifty miles distant. These we visited, but we found all quiet here and the Khirgese at work ; they belonged to a different clan which had not joined the war party.

B., who was married to a very estimable Russian lady, had just been promoted to the General-Managership, and it was necessary for him and ourselves to reach the Spassky mines 650 miles away. Moreover, we were in ignorance as to what might be happening there, and what hostile Khirgese might be between us and them. His wife decided very pluckily to remain here alone with the others, and, loath as I was to take her husband off, it was a necessity.

There was now little danger as a few days afterwards the troops arrived with the machine guns. The Cossacks then followed up the Khirgese, and bivouacked one evening at sundown about three miles from where the latter had taken up their position. All apparently went to sleep, and this being reported to the Khirgese they turned in unsuspectingly, for, in the old days of fighting the Cossacks, neither party attacked at night. At 9 p.m. the Cossacks were up and stole into the midst of the sleeping Khirgese, and with a machine-gun placed right and left of them, laid out, so it was reported, 286 of them ; they capitulated and were allowed to carry off their wounded, a few of their headmen or " Chiays " being kept as hostages.

On our journey we had a run of 350 miles before we should come to a village, a few miles south of Atbasar town, but as the first part of the road was hilly it was not possible to complete this journey in one day and we arranged, therefore, to camp out. About half-way we ran into a small camp of friendly Khirgese who placed a Yurta at our disposal for the night. It was already cold, the lake alongside having its first skimming of ice, but, ice or no ice, we were only too glad to get a good wash in its cold waters, for our ride had been a very dusty one and our faces were caked with dry powder.

These Yurtas are very roomy and comfortable ; in shape they are, as before stated, like a flat-domed or bee-hive-like tent. Our Yurta was about twelve feet in diameter. The frame work was made out of cane and was covered over with a heavy felt of camel hair.

Inside the women had lined it with all kinds of patterns of their Turkish-like embroidery. On the floor they spread out Khirgese carpets, while against its inner walls were piled up curious-looking oriental boxes with equally curious-looking locks. In these they kept their clothing and worldly possessions. The Manager's wife had seen to our creature comforts, and out of a big basket we turned out all kinds of meat-pies and Russian cakes. Going on next morning we reached Atbasar where we called on the Russian officials and met a General who had arrived to take over military command of the district.

From him we learnt that only a few sporadic outbreaks had taken place, and this was confirmed by our own Khirgese subsequently. In the south, whence we had come, were the most formidable risings. These were all rounded up into a cañon in the hilly district. The lowest estimate of the numbers was put by the Khirgese at 10,000 ; and the highest at 20,000, inclusive of women and children. The Colonel in command who met some of our men told them that the rebels could not get out as they had machine-guns all round them ; neither would he risk a single Cossack's life again, but intended to starve men, women, and children to death, and give them an object-lesson which would prevent any further fears of a revolt. Several Russian villages had been wiped out by these insurrectionists. We heard of a school of forty-two little children in one place who were all killed one morning to a child.

Our General friend invited us to a reception that night at which we met the élite of the town who were much interested to hear what we English were doing. Of the navy it was little use to talk ; few, if any, had ever seen a ship. According to their idea, what we were doing was to be measured only by our telling them how many men we had killed and wounded ; and to them this was the only common-sense way of gauging the extent to which we had come into the war.

From here on to Akmolinsk we passed many villages. A few years ago there were only a very few small ones, now these had grown to large ones and in the meantime others in between them had also grown up. In none of them did we see a man of military age ; the whole population consisted of women, children, a few old men, and a few wounded ones. Outside the towns, wherever we went, it was always the same tale. In one village we distributed about one pound of sugar amongst the women. They had not seen sugar for months—a severe deprivation to this nation of tea drinkers.

Alongside of our house in Akmolinsk was another occupied by German officers—prisoners of-war. From here to the mines we

passed a few large villages where, I remember, formerly only the bare Steppe existed.

As at Atbasar, the Smelters were between the coal mines and the copper mines, the latter being seventy-five miles away from the Smelters. Going on to the copper mines we found that some of the Khirgese had gone south, but most of our Khirgese here were at work. One other outbreak of which we heard was on the main road leading to the Siberian railway, and this barred our going home that way.

After having prolonged our stay here until well into the beginning of winter the prospect of a motor-drive some three hundred miles to the Irtysh river was not a very inviting one ; we had determined to venture on this route and to trust to the Khirgese, who have a winter settlement between here and there, being friendly. The day before leaving W. and myself took tea with one of the Russian parties, where all were busily engaged in making underclothing for the soldiers at the front. Piles of coarse linen garments were being busily sorted and packed ; and all the material was bought out of their wages. Here, thousands of miles away from the scene of actual fighting, were these good people working afternoon after afternoon all in the cause of war doing their bit. None of the English-speaking Russians could find an equivalent for " their bit " in the Russian language.

B. started back for the Atbasar camp alone a few days before we left, a very risky and dangerous journey with winter almost upon us. Then we left, after bidding goodbye to both English and Russian staffs, between whom there has always been " *bonne camaraderie*." A very cold wind was blowing in our faces, and how our chauffeur stood up against it was a marvel.

That evening we entered Kooyandie, which had the appearance of a large village or small town but was composed only of stores, or shops, with huge signboards over them. They were not only shut up, but empty, and the only occupants of the place we found were the mistress of the post-station and her husband, the one and only policeman here. The explanation of this inscrutable, uninhabited town, with its numerous well-to-do-looking stores is that once a year a great fair is held here, to which merchants and traders come from all parts of Siberia, Turkestan, Bokhara, and even from as far as Tibet. Even then the stores are only opened for a few days when a big trade, or kind of bartering, is carried on in cattle, camels, hides, tallow, carpets, and Russian-ware and in all kinds of Eastern commodities.

As the cold was intense we put the motor in the stables and buried

it in straw, hoping to keep it from freezing up. Camping on the floor of the post-station house was none too comfortable, and at 3.30 a.m. we rose intending to push on, but, alas! our car was frozen up. In a kind of large open boiler we boiled water, and hour after hour kept pouring buckets of water over our machine, but not till 10 a.m. did we succeed in getting her thawed; then we again started for Barna-Ool, where we met two Russian engineers from a large camp a few miles beyond it. They were employing several hundred Khirgese to sort out the better ore from some ancient ore-heaps, and were putting up a small smelting-establishment to smelt out its lead. It was a very dark night, and we could only travel very slowly, and half-frozen we arrived about 10.30 p.m. Our hosts insisted on a hot supper and not till 12.30 p.m. did we sit down to it; whether because we were ravenous or for some other reason, we agreed we had never had so sumptuous a repast in all our Siberian experience. Again, Russian-like, always anxious to do their utmost for their guests, (though we were complete strangers to them), they even turned out of their own beds in order to give us a comfortable night's rest.

Their information with regard to the Khirgese outbreak was similar to our own—namely, that there had only been a few sporadic outbreaks—and was quite in agreement with what I have already related. In the neighbourhood the Khirgese were all most friendly towards us and adverse to those who had broken out. At no time had there been any concerted action amongst them. The cause of the outbreak was traced to certain German steppe-villages having started a propaganda amongst the Khirgese to the effect that the Russians, who were conscripting the Khirgese young men for labourers on the railways, were taking them away to the front and putting them as screens between the Russians and Germans. Many of these simple folk believed this story and took up arms, saying "let us die, if we have to die, but in our own country fighting the Russians."

Leaving in the early morning we reached Pavlodar that same night, found the river still free from ice, and the last steamer departing for Omsk in three days' time. Here we heard the same story about the outbreak and, it being a telegraphic centre, we got the most recent news from the south via Turkestan, which was that the outbreak had not been a serious one. This outbreak was magnified in the summer of this year by one of our best provincial papers, *The Manchester Guardian*, with headings that ran :- "The greatest massacre the World has ever seen, 500,000 Khirgese massacred," and this at the very time of our visit; moreover, they published a



map showing the area over which these massacres had occurred, two-thirds of which we ourselves had covered. The then-correspondent, Phillips Price, is now reported in the *Globe* of November 23rd, 1918, as a Bolshevist, formerly of the *Manchester Guardian*, and as having been asked to come to England to undertake propaganda on behalf of the Bolsheviks.

From Pavlodar we set out in a fine river-boat but just before sailing we learnt that no meals were to be served on board in the usual custom. We had, however, just time to run ashore and buy a lump of meat, and some bread, with a few boxes of sardines thrown in. The bedding we found had all been put away for the season, it was all because this was her last voyage, but why not have waited till the end of it! Again, so Russian-like! Ice was beginning to show itself on the edges of the river, but there were no signs of it in the river until on the morning of the third day. When we woke up ice was bobbing up everywhere; by 11 a.m. it had formed across the river; by 2 p.m. we were pushing our way through it; and by 6 p.m. we were brought up by it and could barely crush our way through it to the river bank. Here we tied up, and there our steamer was left a prisoner until the spring.

In my various experiences of a Siberian winter I have never seen any river—even a much smaller one—freeze up so rapidly. It was very dark but a soldier on board steered us to a village standing about a mile back from the river. We left our fellow-passengers all wondering how they were going to reach Omsk. On board there were some three hundred Khirgese going there to work on the railway. These had been given their rations for the journey, but had eaten it all, native-like, on the very first day out. Two Russian officers in charge of them were nonplussed as to what was to be done, for, they explained, they had no authority to commandeer food for any of them from the villages between here and Omsk.

Entering a small house with stables attached to it, we found an old man and his wife; we asked them if it would be possible to get a carriage to drive to Omsk fifty miles distant. To our surprise after a little urging the man agreed, telling us that his wife would get us a supper, while he would give the horses a feed, and hitch them up into a light waggon, and would drive us through to Omsk that night, if a friend of his would give him a change of horses on the way there. The good lady supplied us with fresh milk, eggs, butter and bread, while we in return gave her a small supply of tea and sugar of which they had none, and about which she prattled until the old man appeared to tell us he was ready to drive off. Into that open waggon we got; we were but poorly supplied with rugs, the cold

was severe and we felt it, but the good luck we had had in picking up a conveyance deserved a little endurance on our part. About 3 a.m. we arrived at Omsk ; the old man told us he would take a snatch of sleep and start back soon after daylight, 7 a.m.—wonderful old man ! (for old and wrinkled he looked) but perhaps more wonderful were the horses !

In Omsk we had many interviews with the officials from the Governor down ; through the latter's influence we obtained permission to visit again the war-prison-camps both here and elsewhere, and were able to select a few timbermen and artisans for the mines from amongst the Austrian prisoners. These the Commandant was told he might hold provisionally for us pending permission being obtained from Petrograd.

Thence we travelled via Vologda to Moscow. Leaving W. here, I left Moscow for a visit to inspect our coal-mines in the south of Russia situated between the Don coal-basin and Rostoff, a large town at the mouth of the Don where it flows into the Sea of Azoff. Travelling on this route was extremely uncomfortable and congested owing to the movement of troops from the south through Kharkoff. I got the latest news from our Russian Agent who lived at Kharkoff. He being a very influential man I was well posted in what was going on. His news was alarming ; he believed there was treachery amongst high Russian, military authorities, and also in the Cabinet, and that the country was being betrayed to Germany ; rumour was that the Cabinet had given in and had agreed to German Peace-terms. At Rostoff I was surprised to find so fine a town with well-constructed, boulevard-like streets and buildings. From here I went back to our coal-mines, where we had several hundred Austrian war-prisoners working. Amongst them were several well-educated men who were working as miners, and who made no complaint ; on the contrary, they were quite resigned to their lot and glad perhaps to have escaped the carnage of war.

The morning after leaving Kharkoff on my way back to Moscow there was great excitement in my carriage. Everyone was buying newspapers. What was the news ? I wondered ! They came into my compartment pointing to whole *blank* columns headed " Duma Duma." I told them I didn't speak Russian, but unfortunately I remarked in Russian that the columns were as empty as my own head, pointing first to one and then to the other. This was the extent of my Russian, for my vocabulary was a very limited one.

Immediately they all began talking to me, had I not spoken Russian, and yet declared I could not speak it ? It was certain I was a suspect, a spy. Presently a Russian General, well-medalled,

entered my compartment and, turning out the crowd who had pushed in, demanded my passport. I persisted I did not understand Russian. After a time he went out and returned with a Russian lady who spoke French but very badly; my own French was shocking, but we understood each other, and I made plain my position which she explained to the General in Russian. "All's well that end's well," for the General shook hands, laughed heartily, and with a few words to the crowd outside took his departure.

My lady-friend remained; she was in mourning having lost her husband in the war, so she told me; she had since got together a very good boarding-school for girls. She was left with a large well-furnished house, but with little money, and so, by the help of the house and by the assistance of her late husband's connections, had succeeded beyond her own expectations; but what she wanted to know from me was, if there were any Institutions in England to which she could apply for a University graduate to teach English in her school, provided of course, she could satisfy them with her references.

After about an hour's conversation she bid me good-bye, and my former travelling-companions who had kicked up such a ferment were now most affable.

After a few days in Moscow I went on to Petrograd, where I found every room in all the hotels to which I went occupied, but by the help of an English friend whom I met here accidentally I managed to secure a private one. Fortunately it was complete with bed and linen; it is not usual to supply these for the traveller (outside the large hotels of cosmopolitan towns, such as Petrograd or Moscow) is expected to bring his own. It is not considered a clean custom to sleep in other people's linen, so one has to camp on the bare bedstead or floor of one's bedroom.

The news in Petrograd was grave; the blank columns headed "Duma Duma" should have contained Miliukoff's now-historical speech made in the Duma which the Government censored. Miliukoff's speech was the beginning of the revolution. A few days after it Stürmer the traitor fell. From the frying pan Russia jumped into the fire as we all know. As Miliukoff's speech was suppressed and never given fully so far as I know in England, or even Russia, I have set forth a translation of it as an appendix.

Since the reign of terror Miliukoff, it has been reported, has gone over to the German side, preferring German slavery to Russian assassination, but we have not heard as yet his version; I should doubt the truth of this report.

In Petrograd I was joined by my old travelling companion W.,

and we left together for England via Norway, arriving home at the end of the year ; unfortunately many of my reports which were following me in the Embassy-bag went to the bottom of the sea.

Hitherto, I have jotted down incidents of my experiences, mostly in the order of their sequence (unless otherwise stated) but many I have had to leave out for want of space. During the years I was going to and from Russia I made other journeys (as I have already outlined), but as space will not allow for much more I will endeavour to relate briefly a few incidents connected with some of these journeys ; but they are not in the order of their sequence.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### PALMAREJO MINES, MEXICO.

LEAVING England with a brother-engineer we travelled together to Utah where we visited some of the large, copper-concentrating mills and the gold-mines out in the desert country ; here Tonapah formed the centre of a large gold-mining industry. Here I met again my old friend S., of Corean times, who had then but recently married a charming countrywoman of his—the only woman, I believe, who had up to that time succeeded in obtaining a U.S. Mineral-Surveyor's diploma. I renewed my old friendship with him, and added that of his bride to it ; when both came to London, later, on a lengthy visit, we often saw much of them.

Thence we travelled on to Los Angeles, South California, a busy thriving city. From here we travelled through Arizona, and by way of Nogales to Guaymas, a town on the gulf of California ; thence we made our way by a branch railway to Alamos, its terminus. Alamos is an old Mexican town. The Yaki Indians at this time were giving trouble ; and at the railway towns high scaffolds were to be seen with watchmen ready to warn the inhabitants in the small towns alongside them of any approach of raiders. Although there was not much danger of a raid here, still we had to face the possibility of one occurring during the three days' ride that lay between us and our destination, Palmarejo, a large gold and silver mine situated across the boundary line of the State of Sonora and lying just within the state of Chihuahua.

Our first day's ride in an intensely hot sun was a very trying one to me for I was riding a Mexican saddle that did not fit me and I suffered agonies from cramp. We reached our first station, San Barnardo, soon after dark, and I refused to go on the next day unless I could get a better-fitting saddle. The agent here declared there was none larger. Next morning I told him he had better ride into Alamos to obtain one for me, and he then offered me his own as a loan. This solved the difficulty, and the ride for the rest of the journey was like sitting in an arm-chair. A Mexican saddle if it fits is most comfortable for long journeys, but it is the worst saddle of any to adjust oneself to if not a good fit ; it is then simply an instrument of torture !

Arriving at the Company's mill—which was some twelve miles from the mine known as the Palmarejo, but connected with it by a

mountain railway—we at first took up our quarters here. Near by was the small town of Chinipas. The country between it and the mine is mountainous, barren, and not unlike the country one sees when coming up the red Sea a little before reaching Suez.

Going on to the Mine I spent several weeks here examining it, and during this sojourn I was laid up with a short but sharp attack of dysentery. The doctor, an American, told me I had evidently got some "beastly tropical disease." On telling him it was dysentery he exclaimed, "Well! that's interesting to me, for I have never seen a case of it." This was honest certainly, but not encouraging to me. To my surprise he said he would first consult Dr. Manson's book on tropical diseases as he was still doubtful about my case. He was certainly up-to-date in possessing this book! Anyway, he rode off twelve miles to get it and, coming back the same day, offered to prescribe for me. I told him I wanted castor oil and some laudanum, and he replied, "Why! that's antiquated." There was none to be had, but early next day he rode off and covered over thirty miles in scouring the country round to secure some for me, and having secured them they soon alleviated and cured me.

His history was an interesting one; his earliest recollection was that of a small boy selling papers in the streets of Chicago and belonging, apparently, to nobody. An old cobbler used to allow him to sleep in his workshop. Later he taught him to cobble, and he put himself to a night-school. He saved every cent he could make, and still sold newspapers and cobbled until he was old enough to go to college; here he succeeded in passing and in obtaining a degree, though still doing odd jobs in between his studies. Two years after I met him he came to England and served a term at the Tropical School of Medicine. I was abroad at the time but found a letter on my return telling me of his visit. He had a large native practice in the country round here, and was a most energetic man and very popular.

Immediately at the back of the Mexican-built house in which I was living was a small grove of orange-trees, and in the centre of the Plaza facing it, a solitary tree laden heavily with oranges. To see these trees growing in the midst of these barren, dry hills laden with their golden fruit was, by its contrast, a gorgeous spectacle.

While exploring an old part of the mine one day, my companion, the mine foreman, and myself had a narrow escape. We were on the top of some timbers, I with my back against the wall of the lode, making notes in my note-book, the others facing me; suddenly a "crack" came, and we all three found ourselves bunched together, falling gradually as the ground and timbers were giving way,

where to none of us knew, but it might be through old "stopes" several hundred feet below us. There we hung for a few seconds our legs dangling in the air and we jammed together in the timbers. Then suddenly another "crack, crack," came, and through the timbering we dropped, but only about fifteen feet; then we found ourselves landed on a heap of old timbers with numerous rusty spikes sticking up out of them. Beyond an unpleasant jar no mischief was done; the timbering above, though broken and cracked, held the ground from falling and burying us. So gradual was our descent during the jam that I found myself still unconsciously smoking my pipe, but the feeling of our legs all dangling in space, with no idea how great a depth that space might be beneath us, was, to say the least, exceedingly disagreeable.

I might give a good many examples of narrow escapes underground; but wonderful though they may seem to be, and though all miners are liable to such experiences at some time or other, yet the average life of the miner (whether in metalliferous mining or in coal-mining) compares well with that of a man in almost any other trade or profession; metalliferous mining is slightly more dangerous than coal-mining as proved by statistics.

Returning one day to the lower-mill-camp the car we were in ran off the line and landed three feet from the edge of a precipice down which we looked over four hundred feet. The rails on this line had been laid down twenty years before and were terribly worn; the web of the rail was entirely gone in places, but the custom was to relay these on the straight stretches of the line. Although only twelve miles in length it had cost £97,000 to build. A water-race to the mill, twelve miles in length, had originally cost over £100,000 to bring in. The mine was about worked to a "dead head," as we would say, and the company was nearly bankrupt. My report was more or less on these lines, but stated that if fresh capital were put in the mine still had good prospects.

My companion S. remained behind, some of my own clients put in the fresh capital, and S., taking over the management, opened up afterwards 400,000 tons of good payable ore; then the first Mexican revolution broke out! Our own town of Chinipas was besieged for months, the rebels quartered themselves in the old mill, and several times stray shots struck S.'s house where his wife and grown-up daughter were living. They stuck out pluckily through the whole of it. Coming home for a holiday after it, they returned to the mine again, and soon afterwards the second revolution broke out, and commenced at Guazapares, a village beyond the mine. In this second outbreak the bridges on the Alamos

railway were destroyed and all supplies to the mine became cut off. They had, therefore, to leave it and ever since it has been in a more or less derelict state.

The transport of a new mill and an aerial ropeway to take the place of the old worn-out railway was at this time being effected from Alamos to Chinipas,—a very big undertaking in itself, which entailed the transport of several hundred tons of plant. There it still lies having been transported to San Barnardo, about half-way to the mine.

The day I heard that the President Porfirio Diaz had fallen I sold my Mexican bonds which I had held for many years. I believe that had he but resigned four years earlier he would have gone down in history as one of the greatest of the world's rulers. A pure-blooded Indian, yet soldier, lawyer, financier, scientist and sportsman, it was he who defeated the French and brought Mexico out of bankruptcy and ruin until her bonds stood above par, a sure gauge of the country's prosperity and progress. From a country overrun with banditti he made it one where it was as safe to travel as it is in England, except in some of the outlying wilds of the country. Now Mexico has gone back to the state in which she was before Diaz's forty odd years of government, namely, that of constant revolution.

A little while before I left the mine the Chairman of the Company joined me from home, and together we started back, taking the trail that led to the railway running to Chihuahua, for we had business to negotiate with the Government officials in that city. He was a man well-advanced in years, but as hard as nails, and he stood the rough trip involving four days' riding from early morning till late at night which would have bowled over many a young man.

Our first night was spent at Guazapares. Our host there, who entertained us hospitably, was one of the first to be executed in the second revolution. That night, after leaving him, we entered a cañon in the mountains as the sun went down, and a magnificent sight it was to gaze upon those perpendicular cliffs, many hundreds of feet in height, bounding that narrow valley through which rushed a mountain torrent. From Chinipas we had been ascending the whole way and were now at an elevation of 4,700 feet above it; we had left a sub-tropical climate and had entered a frigid one. Before we got through the cañon pitch darkness reigned, yet our muleteers steered us, crossing and re-crossing the stream with the water up to our saddles; it was dreadfully cold. On getting out on the other side we stopped to count the mules and found that one was missing—the one carrying my baggage with my note-books



Two men went back to look for it and we waited for them ; after about an hour the missing mule was found, he was quietly lying down alongside us and in consequence had been overlooked in the darkness. That night we camped in the verandah of a Mexican house, and dried ourselves by the side of a big bonfire ; at this altitude ice was on the ground, and a small running stream near the house was frozen over.

On the fourth day out we came quite suddenly on the " Baranca de Cobra " ; as we emerged from the woods we found ourselves within a few feet of a great precipice from the top of which we looked down many hundreds of feet on to a great plain through which meandered rivers. It was like looking down on to a little miniature world ; Humboldt described it as one of the eight wonders of the world ; only Indians inhabit this sunken little world and they allow no Mexican to enter it. Encircled by its great precipices, which one could follow as far as the eye could reach, it was certainly a very impressive picture of another of nature's master-pieces.

That evening we reached Djitus where we came on the Kansas city and Mexican railway under construction at its furthest end. Then pressing on to Sanches, the terminus of a branch-line connecting with Chihuahua, we camped for the night, obtaining a very good meal at a Chinese-coolie restaurant. At 7 a.m. next day we left by train and arrived at Chihuahua at 6.45 p.m. Leaving the Chairman, who was going on to "Frisco," here, I set out on Christmas day for home via El Paso, St. Louis and Niagara. Again I had a short stay at the latter place, and sailing later, on the S.S. *Adriatic*, arrived home on the 14th day out from Chihuahua.

## CHAPTER XLIX.

### SIAM.

SIAM was another country which I had the good fortune to visit. At that time Hong Kong was my headquarters, and from there I started my tour. I had just missed the mail-boat down to Singapore, but there was a large Hamburg-American cargo-boat just leaving, and the head of J. M. & Co. said he thought he could arrange a passage for me in her. On entering the Company's office and asking them to oblige the firm by giving me a passage, a loud stentorian voice came from a corner of it, where sat her Captain, a German, who overhearing the request yelled out in no polite terms that he would take no passenger ; but he was over-ruled and a passage was granted me notwithstanding his vehemence.

Going on board I mounted a kind of structure like a citadel, built up in the middle of this huge boat, and announced my presence to the Captain. He told a steward to show me my cabin ; following him I descended on to the long sweep of deck and proceeded up to the bows or forecastle, where the Chinese sailors were berthed. Opening an iron door I was shown a small bathroom and informed that that was the only accommodation the Captain had for me. The heat of it was terrific ; the iron bulwarks of the ship formed her outer side, and the sun was full on it. Here I deposited my baggage and left it, hoping it would not melt with the heat ; I locked the door and went up into the officers' saloon, a small one at the back of the bridge.

I joined them at mess ; the food was very bad and all the officers said it was especially bad, and that I must be the cause of it. However, though they were Germans, they behaved very decently to me. I was preparing to camp on the floor of the saloon when the Captain's steward arrived with a message from him that he would not allow me to sleep there but that I must sleep in my cabin. I sent him back a message by the steward to either come and tell me so himself or put his order down in writing. I heard no more, and for four nights I camped there on the floor. The Captain who usually had his meals with the officers never once appeared, and I only saw him at a distance on the bridge.

He had a number of pigeons on board ; these he used to let loose and they were very tame, flying about the ship ; they would return

and alight on his shoulders, showing that he had a soft streak somewhere about him. On deck they had quite a farm of pigs and ducks, and as the weather was calm they were allowed out—a sight that amused us all, and kept us in peals of laughter whilst we watched the pigs and duck slithering about the deck, all endeavouring vainly to keep their balance as the ship rolled.

We had made a fair voyage down, and on my arrival at Singapore I was lucky enough to hit off the boat sailing for Bangkok, and as her "blue peter" was up I prepared to go on board at once. Before leaving I went to the Captain and thanked him for a most delightful voyage and expatiated on the pleasantness of it; this quite took the wind out of the old man's sails, for he had sought deliberately to make it as unpleasant as he could, but I was not going to appear as if I had even noticed it; on the contrary, I told him that it was very kind of him to have made my voyage so enjoyable a one, for that outside the food and rather hard bedding it had been a lovely smooth one. With a few books to while away the time it had really not been so bad as might appear.

On the way up to Bangkok I witnessed one of those sea-phenomena which are come across so seldom even by those who travel in these waters. At one time the surface of the whole sea around us was a moving mass that appeared to be made up of eels, but they were sea-snakes. A bucket was let down the ship's side and dipped into the sea; immediately it filled with these reptiles, but it was emptied of them before pulling it on deck again as they were said to be poisonous. Think of the enormous numbers of them there must have been when a bucket was instantly filled with them! In appearance there seemed to be no difference between them and the land-snakes. The sea, as I have explained, was alive with them—one vast shoal of them!

At Bangkok I was entertained by a very old inhabitant and his wife; I stayed with them several days. Although an Englishman he had formerly been an officer in the Siamese cavalry. He was a personal friend of the King and Princes, and he introduced me to some of the latter; one night we were entertained by one of them at his house where private theatricals were the principal feature of the evening. It was all most interesting, and the bright, coloured dresses and the Turkish kind of divided-skirt-knickerbockers worn by both sexes were new features to me in the way of dress.

I visited the Palaces, not forgetting the sacred white elephant. The unique architecture of these buildings is most impressive and is entirely different from anything seen elsewhere, being a type peculiar to Siam. My old friend Palgrave has written a monograph

on its architecture. Bangkok is so interesting that it is well worth reading one of the descriptive accounts of it given by so many travellers. Suffice it to say that I had a few most enjoyable days here, and that my old friend L. O. little realized what pleasure he gave me when he laid himself out so generously to make my visit one to be remembered always.

From here I left in a small steamer for Langsuan on the east coast and landed there after a two days' voyage. My mission was to report on a large alluvial concession where a great deal of money had been sunk in erecting a very big pipe-line, some four miles or so in length, to bring in water to the workings; where, too, a huge seventy-ton steam Bucyrus-excavator had been erected to dig up the gravel. Two American mechanics had been sent out to erect it, but when completed they were quite unable to run it.

Now a curious thing happened; there was an Annamite, a native of Cochin-China, who had formerly been cook to the Italian Minister at Bangkok who, when going home on a vacation to Italy, had taken this man with him and had had him taught cooking; returning as a chef he remained with his master until the latter's term of service as Minister ended. This man then gave up cooking and became a workman round this mine. He had never seen an excavator at work, but begged to be allowed to try and start it up. As he was so insistent he was permitted to try and, still more wonderful, succeeded in running it most satisfactorily. Now, as an excavator of this size requires both skill and a great deal of judgment, this is another example of how a poor native's mind possesses a latent capacity for greater things than Western civilization supposes.

I made a trip out along the pipe-line, walking the whole distance, Blondin-like, on top of it, and, as it was frequently supported by trestles from twenty feet to thirty-five feet high across stretches of swamp, this was no easy performance; the heat of the piping, with the hot sun blazing on it, was so great that my feet, notwithstanding my thick boots, were almost parboiled and were tender for days afterwards. At that time the low price of tin made the undertaking unprofitable, but at its present price it would be well worth reconsidering certain sections of it. The old chef resumed his other occupation for my benefit during my visit, and many an excellent camp-meal did he turn out for us.

N., a young brother-engineer whom I met here, accompanied me afterwards in a river-expedition to visit some other mines in the interior, and again it proved a most thoroughly enjoyable trip. Our expedition consisted of two long, narrow, Siamese boats or prows; each was provided with a little hut with a covering made

out of matting in which we spread our respective mats and bedding. The mode of propulsion was by poling along the river banks, the poles being made up of very long bamboos, with two polers to each boat ; very skilfully did they pole us along the banks of the river, seldom having to use a paddle except when a sudden turn in the river occasionally found the boats in deep water. At night we usually camped in Siamese houses where the inhabitants prepared us very palatable curries, and were themselves hospitable in putting a house at our disposal.

Passing one village, as the children were coming out of school—for they all had their schools—the little ones trooped down to the river and were soon all to be seen swimming about like so many young duck, in spite of the fact that there were many alligators in the river ; we were told they were quite safe for any attack from these vile monsters was quite unknown.

After a few days I returned to the coast where I left my young companion to travel to the west coast across the hills by elephant, while I took the steamer down the coast to Singapore, calling in at the small ports en route. Again I had the pleasure of meeting my old friends, and was especially pleased to see A., putting up with him as in former days at "Ardmore." Here I wrote my reports and then left again for the west coast of Siam. As in the old days once again I found myself steaming up those beautiful Straits of Malacca.

At Penang I changed steamers finding one going up the west coast to Renong, whither I was bound. Across the river, which here forms the boundary between Siam and Lower Burma, is "Victoria Point" where is stationed a small Indian frontier police force. We cast anchor off the bar of the river, and then in a small native dug-out we proceeded up river for a few hours through a heavy mangrove-forest, and arrived at the town of Renong, a large Siamese village. Calling on the Governor I found him, to my surprise, to be a Chinaman by birth, but now a naturalized Siamese. That evening H. E. invited me with N., who, after an arduous journey across the Peninsula had arrived before me, to dine at Government House.

Next day we started on our journey up into the hills to a place called Hart San Pan with a view to determine whether some extensive tin deposits there offered sufficient inducement to work them on an hydraulic scale. Three elephants were brought up, on one of which I was to mount ; I was informed that I had better get up from the back and once up should be all right. On asking the reason for this unusual method of mounting I was told that as the beast was unused to carrying foreigners he might get restive at the sight of us. Subsequently I found out that he had at one time and

another killed three of his mahouts. In a kind of huge open basket we sat ourselves with his mahout sitting cross-legged on his head, with a horrid-looking, spiked bamboo in his hand. We had hardly started off when the elephant shied at a pony-cart that happened to be passing us at the time ; he took fright and made off at a sharp trot, and was not brought up until his mahout had jabbed him repeatedly with his spike on the head ; and with each thrust the poor creature plaintively squealed. Having brought him up we then proceeded at a steady, walking stride.

Getting clear of the town we entered a very steep ravine, or "gulch," down which flowed a mountain-torrent, and we had to cross and re-cross it many times with the water up to the breast of the elephant. As we proceeded up stream large boulders blocked the valley, and to all appearance a further progress was impossible ; but not so ! the huge beast shoved his fore-knees up on to one of these and pushing himself forward with his hind legs gradually got first one and then the other of them up on to the boulder. Once on top of one of these he carefully felt the boulders in front of him with the curled up tip of his trunk ; after assuring himself of the stability of one of these he cautiously strode across on to it ; and so from one to another he worked his way until a side-track up to the valley was gained. As we passed under trees he would, at a signal from his mahout, break down with his trunk any overhanging branches which would otherwise have swept us out of our basket. No horse could possibly have made his way up this ravine. Slowly but steadily we ascended the valley until at the height of a hundred feet above it we debouched at its head on to what was more or less a level.

Coming to our camp the three elephants were let loose but were manacled by chains placed around their forefeet ; again, to my surprise, they started off climbing a very steep hill near by, notwithstanding their fetters, feeding as they went up it off the young jungle-plants, and pushing their great, unwieldy bodies through it. No horse could have possibly climbed this steep ascent even unfettered. This trip gave me an insight into the capabilities of these sagacious animals. On another of these same trips when we came to a very steep descent on a hill-side the same elephant would, by putting his forefeet together and bracing himself up in front and kneeling on his hind legs, slide or toboggan down the trail ; another form of progression which one would have thought impossible !

As the prospects at Hart San Pan were not sufficiently good we returned to Renong. Here I remained several weeks boring an extensive flat for tin. Imagine a small desert of white sand bordered

on two sides by lovely cocoanut and palm trees, at its upper end by high hills swathed in forest and jungle, and at its lower end by a mangrove-forest. The result of our boring was to find at a depth of thirty-six feet to forty feet a tin deposit or "Karang" derived from the Hart San Pan hills, the stream from which had in course of time brought down and concentrated here these tin sands; this discovery led to the erection of three large dredges whose operations have since opened up a very prosperous industry in recovering the tin.

During this time we lived in a Siamese house in the centre of the village, and I have described elsewhere how we rid our house and compound entirely of their swarms of mosquitoes by the application of a little kerosene over their breeding places.

At the far end of the village was a small Siamese tin-smelter, where the neighbouring miners used to send their tin sands to be smelted and where, with their crude bellows and primitive little furnace, we often watched the molten metal being poured into ingot-moulds. The Siamese struck me as a more intelligent and a more alert people than the Malays, but my intercourse with them was far too short for me to form any mature opinion. There was no Englishman in charge across the river at Victoria Point, though it was a British outpost, but a native officer was hospitable in entertaining me and showing me round.

Although Renong is a very hot place—the heat being greater but drier than on the Malay Peninsula—it is very healthy. Often day after day I used to be up to my knees in water with the hot sun pouring down on me, yet I never suffered from a trace of fever. If anything was conducive to contracting a dose of malaria these conditions were ideal.

My friend L. whom I had met in Bangkok paid us a visit, and from him I heard many interesting accounts about the Siamese, their customs, institutions and history. Few (if any) Europeans know the country and its people better than he, having been brought up from boyhood amongst them and educated as a small boy with the King. But my purpose is not to write a book about Siam, so I refrain from any further reference to this country.

On my return journey we had a number of Burmese passengers who, like the Siamese, are great gamblers, and all night long I was disturbed by these people as they sat gambling at my cabin door; their prattle and the chink of their beads as they kept tossing them into little metal cups never ceased.

## CHAPTER L.

### BRITISH NORTH BORNEO.

RETURNING to Singapore—almost a second home to me—I prepared for a visit to British North Borneo and started soon afterwards. Our first port of call was the small town of Labuan ; landing on the little jetty I walked along the frontage, which was lined with coconut trees, to the coal-mines a short way out of the town. After going underground I spent the rest of the day with the small staff of Englishmen living there. Unfortunately the heavy amount of water with which these mines had to deal forced the Company to close them down soon afterwards.

That evening I met an officer who had just returned with five Dyak head-hunters whom he and his six police had captured. Hearing that a gang of these natives, who had been marauding the villages in the interior for some time, were living at a village up a river, he and fifteen police stealthily worked their way up to the village and suddenly surprised the Dyaks one evening a little before sunset. One of them rushed out of a Kampong (native house) and made a bolt for the jungle, carrying with him a hoop from which were strung a number of human heads ; the officer immediately directed his men to concentrate their fire on him, but he escaped as if with a charmed life. They succeeded, however, in capturing five of these head-hunters, and he was then on his way with them to Jesselton, our next port of call.

There we stayed two days. This town was the seat of the Government, and thence a railway had been completed which ran about sixty miles inland, following a river-valley most of the way. In order to secure freight for it the natives had been prohibited from bringing in their jungle produce down the river by prow—a very short sighted policy. Again, every native had to come into town to purchase a licence for permission to cut jungle-produce. The Dyaks, who are engaged chiefly in this work, are a shy people, and only the boldest would carry out what is to them so formidable an undertaking. Hence there was a great emigration of these people into Dutch Borneo where the cutting and marketing of this produce were unhampered by any such unwise restrictions.

From here we sailed for Sandakan. Soon after passing out from Jesselton we sighted Mount Kini Balu, some 13,696 feet high, and the



highest peak in Borneo, away in the distance. Coasting along the shores we saw one continued fringe of tropical and typical vegetable life clothing them. Rounding the most northerly cape we soon afterwards entered Sandakan, a second seat of the British North Borneo Government ; it is a very pretty town with its terraced buugalows built in Indian style, and stands on high ground above the port and native village.

The community consisted largely of civil servants and of officers belonging to the police force, with a few visitor-planters from neighbouring tobacco-estates. North Borneo cigars are now well-known on the market and compare, in my opinion, favourably with Manila cigars. Many of the men had their wives and families with them, and this little British settlement, in this remote part of the world, stands out as a picture of what British enterprise (with all its attendant hardships) is carrying on silently on the confines of the vast Empire, by means of peaceful penetration and civilizing influences. Even here in this tiny outpost, Klings from the Coromandal coast, Sikhs and Punjaubis from Northern India, Malays from the Straits Settlements, and Chinese, had been induced to gather ; the whole community, though so mixed, was living in peaceful serenity under a government which, though comparatively good, was far from being typical of our best. The struggle to make ends meet in such an undeveloped country (possessing, though, immense latent resources) perhaps forced unwise and uneconomic legislation upon her. Given adequate capital to develop this great, virgin tract of country British North Borneo should at no distant date enter a stage of prosperity that will bid fair to make her one of the many valuable assets of this Empire. Since my visit the introduction of the rubber-industry has already given her a great impetus towards that goal.

Remaining here a day I was given an insight into the ways of the Government by several of the officials. The manner in which their civil servants were recruited was worthy of notice. Young public school boys were enticed by what appeared to their parents to be fair openings with nice salaries to begin with, but the delusion soon disappeared on their arrival. If they were of a social disposition and good bridge-players and tennis-players they were likely to be retained at headquarters, where they quickly found themselves unable to live on their income and fell into debt, with few chances of ever obtaining anything like a decent salary. If, on the other hand, they were not of a social disposition it was not long before they were shunted off to up-country stations, too often to find themselves cut off from all society with nothing but a native

environment ; the inevitable in most cases overtook them—they fell down to the level of the surrounding influences and became wrecks of humanity, ending not uncommonly in suicide. This I heard repeated by one and another. Let us hope things have changed since those days.

The system of raising revenue by exploiting the native and our own planters was another unwise step taken in order to meet expenditure. It was a short-sighted policy and very different from the more liberal ideas of the Dutch.

My mission here was to visit and report upon certain coal mines which belonged to a London Company, and which were situated close to the extreme eastern boundary that separates the Colony from Dutch West Boreno. It is remarkable that, of the only two collieries opened up in the Colony, one should be found on the extreme eastern end, and the other on the extreme western end. From here to the Gulf of St. Lucia—into which flows the Silimpopo River on whose banks the colliery is situated—is about 250 miles by sea, and on this journey I started in a small open launch accompanied by the Company's Sandakan agent. The sea was as calm as a mill-pond when we left Sandakan, and continued so the whole way ; our voyage in that frail craft would have been a perilous one had we encountered a storm.

Leaving one evening we steamed out in the midst of the most beautiful surroundings ; we skirted the shores and passed between little pearls of graceful-looking islands.

Rounding Hog's Head—a very striking promontory—and standing out well to sea, we sighted one of the Sulu Group of Islands on our northern horizon. We cast anchor during the darkest hour of the night and were only disturbed in our slumbers by the number of great fish that kept jumping and splashing in and out of the sea. We put into Darvel Bay and called on some tobacco-planters who owned large plantations here ; with them we spent a few hours. We spent another night similarly to the last, but the sea was particularly phosphorescent and as the fish jumped out of the water the splashes of light were very resplendent.

The following afternoon we arrived at the Colliery's wharf which was located on a large island near the mouth of the river in what was known as Cowie harbour, just 1,254 miles from Singapore or 1,325 miles from Hong Kong. The island is known by the name of Sibatak, and through it runs the boundary line separating the two colonies of the English and Dutch. Here we found a few houses with an Englishman in charge, where the coal was stored ready to load up ocean-steamers. Steaming ten miles up the river we came

upon the Company's No. 1 Station, where were their hospital and the doctor's house, with some stores and a loading-wharf for barges to come alongside.

Another mile and a half further up was the present temporary terminus of a railway, connecting up with the mine. Here the coal was shot from the trucks into barges alongside its wharf. Above this station the river suddenly narrowed and was navigable for only a few miles further up by native prows. Thence over a two foot gauge railway we travelled four miles to the mine. Here, in a large clearing in the forest and jungle, we came on a series of bungalows built for the white staff, all the equipment and plant belonging to the colliery.

With a very small staff the Manager had opened up a large colliery for this part of the world—a splendid example of pioneer-work being so far removed from civilization that even labour had to be brought in. It said much for the ability of the manager who carried out this work, and for that of the Consulting Engineers at home who organized, and planned it. One of the latter had been out recently on a visit and, meeting him at home in later years, I had the pleasure of congratulating him on the work they had so successfully accomplished. I have remarked on this in some detail because, as just stated, it is a splendid example of pioneer-work, and is a type of work which we mining engineers have to face frequently.

I found the head mechanic had just brought down from Hong Kong his wife, children, and governess, who seemed perfectly happy in their strange surroundings. I found they had opened up some very fine coal-seams of excellent quality; the only remaining real difficulty was that of inducing ships to call in here for it. Most of the coal was then being shipped in barges all the way to Sandakan where there was a fair demand for "bunker coal."

Visiting some coal-seams on another property a few miles away we came on the spoor of some wild elephants which had just passed through the forest a little before us. From the way the jungle had been trampled down it looked as if about ten or twelve of them had been having a regular frolic; we could see, too, high up on the tree-trunks, the marks where they had stopped to rub their backs.

After spending some time in a survey of these mines I once more set out on my return-journey, leaving that little group of my countrymen behind me in the fastnesses of the Borneo forest; they were engaged upon the opening up of what would be a new coal field if the marketing difficulties of the coal were got over; the quality of the coal was comparable with any found in the Far East with the exception of a few seams that could be counted on one's

fingers. The first really hard piece of pioneering was surmounted ; think of what it meant in the first place to penetrate into a heavy jungle and forest-country, far removed from human habitations or labour-supplies, there to collect data, make surveys, and plan out and estimate a scheme for the future. Such is a picture of British enterprise !

Calling in on our way back at our tobacco-planters' camp they presented me with a huge, zinc-lined, soldered-down case of Darvel Bay choicest cigars, and many a good smoke did I afterwards enjoy from it !

On my arrival back at Sandakan I found one of J. M. & Co.'s timber-ships awaiting me. I was two days overdue and the Captain was not too gracious in consequence. I went on board directly ; we sailed immediately for Hong Kong and arrived at that place after a week's run.

## CHAPTER LI.

### DUTCH EAST BORNEO.

My next expedition was to go down to the Beraow river in Dutch East Borneo and explore some Dutch Coal-Concessions situated up that river. Chartering a small eighty-ton steamer I once more set out with a friend who had volunteered to accompany me, and also with D., the chief engineer of the Indo-China S.S. Company. Sighting the Philippine Islands we kept a direct course down to the mouth of the Beraow river, where we arrived on the ninth day out after a delightfully smooth voyage.

This river is one of the five large rivers of Borneo, and has four outlets to the sea, two of which are navigable for large steamers. Entering the Tideong Channel we steamed up the river about fifty miles; where it divides into two, on the right bank is the Kelai River, and on the left the Segah River; on the point of land between these two rivers is the trading town of Tarjredep. Here the Dutch Controleur resides. The town forms a fair-sized trading settlement and contains from 200 to 300 houses. Here also reside a few Europeans, Holland, Germany, England, and France being each represented.

On the right bank of the main river a little below the settlement is the native town of Sambiliong, and on the left bank is Gunong Tebur; these towns stretch up to and along the Kelai and Segah rivers respectively. This was quite a busy scene, for between these two towns or villages and Tarjredep "tonkongs" laden with jungle-produce from up the rivers, and canoes or native prows were busy going to and fro. Each of these native towns with a population of about 2,000 forms the capital of a large district, and these districts are ruled over respectively by the Sultans of Sambiliong and of Gunong Tebur, subject to the control of the Netherland Indian Government.

We tied up off Tarjredep which lay in front of us, a long, straggling settlement facing the river. My first duty was to call on the Dutch Controleur, who subsequently formally returned my call, and introduced us that evening to the European members of the Community. Amongst these in particular was a French gentleman who was formerly well-known in Paris, and was famous for his racing stables. He had gone through a large fortune till there was

but little of it left ; so, after many years of a luxurious life in Paris, he had started on a trip to the east to see what could be done with what remained of his fortune ; and here he had settled down. He and another man, a Dutchman, had taken up a large island at the mouth of the river and were engaged in clearing it and planting it with coconuts. Two years had passed since they had commenced and he told me that he fully expected in another seven years to realize an annual income sufficient to live again in his beloved Paris as a "respectable citizen." I could not help being fascinated by this remarkable man living in this out-of-the-way, small community—so different from all his past experience—and working hard as overseer in that boggy soil saturated with malaria ; he was so cheerful and pleasant in his depressing environment, and, (as all said of him), was the life and soul of the community.

The day after our arrival we paid our respects to the two Sultans living on opposite sides of the river, and later in the day received their official calls. The following day we started with our camp equipage and stores in the ship's boat, towed by a small launch which we had succeeded in hiring. We pitched our camp some ten miles above the settlement on the right bank of the Kelai river, and for the following days I was hard at work cutting paths through the jungle, and surveying and investigating numerous outcrops of coal found here. The chief engineer undertook, with a gang of coolies, to get out about thirty tons of coal from two of these seams ; with this we loaded up our little steamer at Tarjredep.

The Concession comprised an area of thirty-four square miles ; it was heavily timbered, with a heavy jungle-growth running through it, so I had my work cut out to complete my examination of it at the earliest possible moment ; for every day we kept the steamer waiting was a heavy expense. One of the seams discovered and found in the face of a small bluff was subject to what we call "air" or "wind blasts." On one of our coolies unsuspectingly putting a pick into it, it suddenly burst forth, scattering pieces of coal as if from a bursting shell. The poor coolie was badly cut about the legs and body. Before we could approach it again we had to pad the coolies up with sacks, and at every stroke of the pick the same phenomenon occurred. This curious occurrence is due to the coal being under great tension.

During the last three days I was engaged in exploring the jungle beyond the immediate area covered by these seams. Taking a party of natives we set out at daybreak on the last day to make a long tramp into the jungle and to investigate the geology of the surrounding hills. About 3 p.m., when I wished to return to camp, the

natives wanted to go back by the route we had come. I had carefully kept a compass-trace of our route and from it knew that we had worked right round in almost a semi-circle; taking off the angle, I gave the word to cut a road through the jungle by it; but they had no conception of the actual direction in which the camp lay. They all declared I was wrong and that we must go back on our trail. After an hour-and-a-half's work we came straight out on to the camp, and no bushmen were ever more surprised than my Bornese natives. I was astonished to find out how little idea of direction these people had when in the jungle—so unlike most native tribes.

In a hot, tropical jungle this kind of work is very exhausting, for all day long the perspiration pours off one in streams, so that I was not sorry to be once more on our little steamer. I still had some negotiations to carry through with the Controleur and the Sultan of Sambiliang, and while certain documents were being drawn up we took a launch and a pack of dogs belonging to my friend the Frenchman and went up the Segah river to hunt wild cattle. Natives had been sent in during our stay here to cut roads through a light jungle on to which it was hoped to drive the cattle. Posting ourselves along one of these we waited for the beaters and dogs to work the cattle up to it. We heard them come crashing through the jungle, but they swerved just before coming on to the road, and crashed off again into the jungle, so that we lost our chance of a shot. Two of the dogs got excited and followed them, and would not come back at the call of the whistle so we had to return without them.

On my final visit to the Sultan of Gunong Tebur I was much interested in some native blow-pipes he showed me, bored out of hard wood and as true as a rifle-barrel. As we were steaming past his town on our voyage back we were signalled to stop, out shot a canoe from shore and came alongside of us, and one of these blow-pipes was handed up to me with a note, which, when translated, expressed a wish that the pipe might ever remind me that I had left a friend behind in his Highness. This blow-pipe, a fine specimen of native skill, I have kept as a reminder of him.

Off Manila we were struck by a typhoon, and how our little craft survived it was an amazement, I think, not only to ourselves but to our Captain. For two days no food could be cooked, but I did not miss it. Lying in my berth suddenly the lamp that was swinging in the little cabin facing my own tiny cabin flew out of the ring in which it was seated and landed in my berth. Fortunately the lamp extinguished itself, but the hot chimney was smashed into

atoms, and how I ever extricated myself from these hot pieces without getting cut was a miracle.

Two other expeditions which I made from Hong Kong are worth a notice, both were to Tong-king, French China, and one of them took me across its borders into Yunan; but as space will not allow of any further detailed description I will refer to them only briefly. I stayed at Hanoi, the capital, for a few days on each visit, and from there made several journeys into the interior by boat and rail and long journeys by rickshaw and on foot. On one of these journeys I put up with a couple of French officers who commanded a frontier block-house with a company of Annamite soldiers. Most hospitably was I entertained by these two isolated and cultivated gentlemen. For eighteen months they had been living here cut off from everyone. The picturesque dress of the Annamites (especially their curious hats) is quite a distinguishing feature of the country! The flat, wheel-like hat of the girls—in shape that of a small cart wheel and covered with a black, pleated lining, was balanced gingerly on the top of the head.

The great plains through which the Red River passes form a vast expanse of paddy fields all of which was formerly only a swamp, but has since been brought under cultivation by means of extensive dykes and canals engineered by the French. As I got into hill country the enterprise of the French was again in evidence; the railway climbed up through country which was most difficult on account of the sliding nature of its hill-sides. On the frontier, in spite of a very malarial climate, I met quite a small band of Frenchmen with their wives, and, in a few cases, their families. Along the river that separates Tong-king from Yunan we came across fishermen fishing with cormorants; they fish in the day with them as well as in the night, unlike the Japanese who do so only at night.

I will only add that what the French have done in opening up this country, after having conquered it in their many desperate fights with the black flags, is remarkable, and stands out as a monument of what the guiding hand of a good government can do. From this Red River delta and the plains above it there is now carried on an enormous export trade in rice, which is the result of much skill, well-spent money and patience. Hanoi itself was laid out on too pretentious a scale, and the houses were too spread out and far apart as drainage, gas and water works were thereby made very costly. There are many very beautiful *quintas* but the heavy taxation in which the inhabitants have been involved is more likely to kill the town than to bring it prosperity.

I will finish my Eastern incidents with just one more story of an



experience on one of my Chinese expeditions : It was on an expedition to some coal mines between Nanking and Chinkiang before the days of the railway connecting these two cities. One morning early I descended into one of the mines accompanied by a young Englishman who was to act as my interpreter. Soon after getting underground he was so nervous, never having been underground before, that he begged to return to surface. There was nothing to be done but to let him go and to trust myself to the head-Chinaman, and accompanying the latter I followed all the intricacies of the curious methods of opening out the coal, made doubly unusual by a whole series of what we call "step faults." The air was abominable ; in places the lamps would hardly burn. My Chinese vocabulary was very limited ; I thought, I had told my guide I wished to go up to surface, but he, instead, kept on ; and finally I recognized that we were going through the mine a second time. The levels were low, the dust in thick clouds, and the air suffocating. My head was simply bursting, and again I kept expressing, as I thought, my wish to go to the surface. It was all of no use ; do what I would he either mistook me or was determined I should become well-acquainted with the mine ; my interpreter afterwards informed me that I had asked to be taken over and not out of the mine ! It was nearly 4 p.m. before I finally escaped from it, and I don't remember feeling so downright ill and exhausted from a visit to any other mine !

A few more incidents and I finish.

## CHAPTER LII.

### TO CANADIAN GOLD AND SILVER MINES.

IN the summer of 1911 I arrived on the Porcupine Goldfields, Canada, to the south of Hudson Bay ; at that time the field was a new one. Only a few days previous to my arrival a most fearful forest-fire swept over it, standing as it did in a pine-forest. The stories I heard were heartrending, and many of them told of magnificent bravery in efforts to save from that terrible conflagration. Many people in trying to escape the flames were drowned in the lake—rushing in up to their necks they were either overcome by the smoke and heat, or by the waves. Others, again, far-removed from the lake, managed to save themselves by jumping into the mine-tanks ; some few escaped death by covering themselves with wet blankets and lying prone on the ground. Others raced before the oncoming waves of flame on horses or in waggons, but many of them were overtaken and burnt to death. The only son of a very old friend of mine, a brother-engineer, managed to save a number of women and children by rushing with blankets dipped in water and covering them over, but he himself succumbed. In another case, the manager, his wife, and little daughter all sought refuge in a shaft with a few of the miners. Seeing the top of the shaft-timbers catch fire two managed to escape out of it ; though both escaped one of them afterwards died from his burns, while all the others left in the shaft were burnt to death. In a wide, open space, clear of all trees for several hundred yards, I was shown a trench in which two men were burnt to a cinder, the only explanation being that a cloud of vapour-resin, distilled from the pines, and wafted along over them, must have fired suddenly and enveloped them in flames.

At the outbreak of this war I was again there ; all traces of that terrible fire were gone, and near where those two men were killed I found one of the world's largest gold-mines working. At the time of my first visit it was little more than a very good prospect.

During our visit we made a very lovely trip up Lake Temiscaming, one of Canada's beautiful lakes. The peculiar silence of its waters was remarkable ; the echo of our little steamer from its wooded shores resounded and re-echoed across its waters as if from some Leviathan. Occasionally we put into some logging-camp along its shores where a few cases of stores were landed, a passenger or two

picked up ; and we would continue on our way, the thud of our engines breaking the strange silence which seemed to pervade the whole of our surroundings.

We broke our journey at a small settlement and drove out in a buggy to some silver-mines which we were to inspect. I never came across so great profusion of wild berries as there were along the few miles we covered ; there were quantities of even wild strawberries and raspberries. Parties of Indians were engaged in picking these, and every season they visit these parts for this purpose and ship tons of them to Cobalt.

Arriving at the mine we found that everyone had been engaged in beating back one of the forest-fires which had nearly engulfed the camp. Fortunately the wind had changed and the fire as we watched it, though an awe-inspiring sight, was one on which we could look in safety for it was receding rapidly from where we were.

I was just setting out for California when the news was conveyed to me by one Peter Clark that war had been declared. He, poor fellow, is now on the Roll of Honour. On my way down to Montreal I stopped at my old friend B.'s home ; there I spent a week-end with another very old friend, a brother engineer who had accompanied me out from England. The last evening we canoed down the river with B., his wife, their cousin, and her husband, and picnicked out below some rapids, and a splendid supper was cooked by a camp-fire. How little did we think that of his family of five men, four would soon have passed thither in this war, my friend B. still surviving. In that little town of A. my friend raised a company of soldiers, and later on I saw them at morning service under the trees at Bramshott, with General Smith-Dorrien present. It was a lovely hot, sunny morning, and a finer lot of men could hardly be wished for, but in that terrible Somme battle very few of them survived. At Montreal the tone of the city, and of the whole country, so far as I could gauge by its people and newspapers, showed that the significance of the war was fully realized ; " Canada had jumped to it."

Taking an " Allan " liner here we sailed for England, but after passing Quebec we had to put back and wait several days as German cruisers were reported to be at the mouth of the St. Lawrence river. When they were cleared away we again sailed. At Liverpool newspapers were eagerly read for the latest news, but nothing we read in them seemed to show that the country realized the magnitude of the war that lay before it.

Arriving in London I bid good-bye to my fellow-companion and brother engineer with whom I had spent a most interesting time

in our joint trip to those Canadian gold and silver fields. Alas! I was met by my brother and heard from him that my wife had gone into a nursing home two days previously and that an immediate operation was necessary, as most serious internal troubles had suddenly developed. On going to the home I found her quite bright and cheery, and no one would have thought to have seen her that her life was hanging on a thread. Next morning the operation took place but only revealed that nothing could be done for her. Later on we took her home where she lingered on until the following Christmas Eve. Up to the very last, though suffering greatly, she remained the same woman with only one thought and that for others, none for herself. I remember so well telling her that her illness could only end in one way; but it was no shock to her; on the contrary she was all brightness; the prospect of death, she said, "apart from any physical suffering it might involve, was but the lifting of the latch, just the passing within the veil." For those last few months that she was still left to us Heaven was round about her, no distant place, as she used to say, but a "state," and in it she certainly lived.

After her death I opened a letter which had been written a few days before and in which were a few instructions with regard to her funeral. It was a simple request, asking that only those in the house should attend the funeral, that neither relatives nor friends should be invited; she wished for no mourning over her, and no flowers, but for a few palm leaves placed on her coffin as emblematic of victory, "Life out of Death."

Twenty-six years had passed away since we married; in many of them we had been separated by reason of my professional duties, but through them all she seemed to grow in ever-increasing and expanding thoughtfulness and knowledge,—an "Angel of Light," diffusing light on all those with whom she came in contact, whether of our race, or of the black, brown, or yellow peoples. Piles of letters I received from those who had known her, and all without exception speak of her in the same strain in which I have thus written of her. Though gone there ever remains the delightful remembrance of all that she was to me.

As I look back and read over my reminiscences, I only now realize how many and varied have been my opportunities of observing nature and the human race under all sorts and conditions of life; and I ask myself what has been the effect upon me, or what in them has left its greatest imprint upon me? My answer in one word is "Life."

Looking back at the practical side of my experience, especially

in those tropical solitudes amidst the labyrinths of forest and jungle, and reviewing, on the other hand, the theoretical and scientific side, the retrospect fills me with profound awe ; in it one perceives life, abounding, increasing in its activities, permeating everything around and ever silently striving to make itself felt whether in the forest trees or their parasites, in the great pampas or the deserts, in the ocean or a pond of water, in men or in microscopic organisms. Yes ! life abounding throughout all nature perceived but not understood. At its head, standing pre-eminently forth, is Man ; in him we meet with the same phenomena for life is in every tissue and bone of his organic body, but we have in him something more, something beyond the mere forces or energy of that which we call " Life," something entirely apart and separate from it, or rather it is " Life " in another sense, wherein he is conscious of his " Ego," that something so different from mere organic life, and in order to distinguish it from the latter I spell it with a capital " L." What is Life? Sages, poets, philosophers have all sought to interpret it, but have apart from revealed religion signally failed. For myself as I draw nearer the end of life's journey the answer is contained in St. John's simplest and profoundest of words :—

" In Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men." "And the Logos dwelt among us and we beheld His Glory."

With this reference to the imprint left upon me by my wanderings afar I close my final " Olla Podrida."

## APPENDIX.

MILIUKOFF'S SPEECH IN THE DUMA, 1/14 NOVEMBER, 1916.

### COMMENCEMENT OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION.

“Gentlemen,

“We have all heard of funeral orations, sad affairs, yet they serve some purpose. Let us analyse these purposes. Firstly, we see that such orations remind the relatives and friends of the deceased of some of his good qualities. Secondly, they may inspire a listener to imitation; and thirdly, they give the orator the opportunity to relieve his feelings, or, better still, to practise his oratorical power. But you have noticed, gentlemen, that whatever the aim of the oration it leaves the dead dead. What would you, I wonder, think of an individual who should attempt an oration to resurrect the dead—to revive the spirit which has passed and bring him back amongst the living? Mad, yes, I agree; yet there are occasions when such an endeavour would be permissible.

“Gentlemen, I am standing on this Tribune with this mad desire upon me. Like a fire this desire has burnt into my very soul. I want to deliver an oration over the dead, to resurrect it, because we, the mighty Russian Empire, cannot think of leaving dead the most precious entity in a Nation's possession. The corpse over which I, together with the bulk of Russian society, weep tears of blood must not remain lifeless. We must revive it. You and I must use superhuman effort, all our powers, magic, witchcraft, call it what you like—but it must be made to live. This highest inheritance of a Nation—its honour—must not be buried. Tarry with me, have patience with me, I am a sorrowful mourner. Honour has died in Russia, and before the world at large becomes aware of our dead we must bring it to life again.

“Do you know that unless you act now, unless you do your very utmost, the name of Russia will stink in the nostrils of humanity? Even the most savage tribes of the world will turn aside on the approach of a Russian, because Russia is about to betray the trust of her Allies. Allies of whom she should be proud, like the gaolbird when he is received by the Mayor and Corporation. Allies to whom she ought to listen with respect and humiliation. The oldest civilized

countries in the world, the oldest democracies. Allies who are careful in the selection of their friends. Allies who have lowered their prestige to call us friends. Allies who have helped us. Allies of blood-wealth. And these are to be betrayed. Judas has closed his bargain! Judas is the traitor amongst us. I quite understand your turmoil, I can read the terror in your eyes. Even the President's hand is quaking. He rings his bell nervously, but even the bell revolts; it strikes, but instead of its usual shrill note you hear it muffled, the funeral bell. No, it will not quit me; its sound re-echoes in my soul and urges me to further effort. I have here the evidence of Judas. Evidence in the cold figures—shekels, gentlemen—the pieces of silver for betrayal. A new sound comes out of the bell; the jingle of silver, the blood money.

“ Either Russia is a fool or a knave. Which is it? Was it not madness to appoint as a Prime Minister a man with a name and a face apart from our sympathies and methods; a man of a race with whom we are at war? Is it a frolic in which our manhood from the lowest of peasants upwards is shedding its precious blood? Is it a money-making expedition into which we are sent? Are the trenches the steps towards riches for the Premier and his clique? Are the moans of the wounded, the groans of the dying, only the accompaniment of a festival—of a carnival? Is it only another method of shedding Russian blood by German autocrats in Russia? Has it all been pre-arranged? Answer! Let your conscience, your Soul, answer before you howl like a band of hooligans or starving wolves. What are we allowing to take place? Why are we silent? Yes, silence, our silence, is golden to Stürmer and his colleagues; but for us, for our generations to come, it is a crime, a terrible bloody crime; when honour is buried all we shall have to leave to our descendents is disgrace, and everlasting disgrace which even time will not efface.

“ Awake, you sons of Russia, you representatives of the Russian people, and bestir yourselves to avert this, the greatest catastrophe!

“ Stürmer is in negotiation for separate peace.

“ Stürmer has betrayed Russia.

“ Stürmer is dis-arranging supplies for our brave sons and brothers in the trenches.

“ Stürmer is doing it for German money.

“ I have a document which shows every mark which he received from Germany from July, 1901 to July, 1916. Let him come and deny it, and, if I am allowed to live after this (though I'll gladly die if honour lives) I will bring witnesses to prove the truth. Traitors and spies are amongst us. No doubt, says Stürmer, separate peace will be beneficial to Russia when arranged by Stürmer, but what is

Russia without honour? Rise up, dead Honour! Arise from thy coffin, and let us see thee live! Come, face thy murderer in that high position, accuse him in front of this Assembly: let thy voice thunder!

"Yes, I am emotional, but where is the man who, knowing all this can be cool—can be unmoved? why look! there sits the Ambassador of an Allied country, the coldest and calmest, and yet, though he follows me with difficulty, he is pale, he is perturbed.

"I am cool in comparison with the crime with which I am charging Stürmer. I wish I were younger. I wish the spirit of 1905 were upon me—it would be practical emotion then. You accuse me of shouting, of being mad. I agree; but if you are sane after having heard what I have said, you also are traitors. All right, I withdraw; it is against the regulations to call you traitors, it is admittedly heated. I know you too well to even think it of you. On the contrary, I am standing on this Tribune only because you are honest men and true; you will not tolerate these things now you know of them. You will, as I said in the beginning, resurrect dead honour and bring gratitude instead of contempt into the hearts of our children. Rachel, we are told, is crying for her children; if you will open your ears you will hear a heartbroken sob—a sob which will fill you with horror. Do you know who it is crying? Russia! the gallant Russia, the brave Russia, the Mother of us all, bad and good, is crying. Her heart is breaking. Are we to help her, we, her sons? This heartens me. This is the miracle I have been working for. The dead has come back to life. Your shouts of encouragement are its first sign's of life. Now with a live honour in our midst we can speak more calmly, we can deliberate.

"As you know our agreement with our Allies does not permit a separate peace—with one exception. This exception should have been known to our statesmen only; but it is known in Berlin. And Berlin has its friends here; what is easier therefore, than to make the exception possible? Now, just take the trouble to analyse the activity of the Stürmer Ministry since its inception. What were all measures adopted for? What were they intended to produce? The oppression, the disorganization? What is the aim of all these acts? Dissatisfaction of all the masses? What does such dissatisfaction produce? Revolution! Red, bloody Revolution! And this is the exception to make separate peace possible. No, Berlin does not pay money for nothing! Stürmer had to earn it and he did. He paved the way for a revolution as the means of separate peace. Must not the great Russian public be told of this and be warned to suffer and be patient? But were it not better to remove the cause of their suffering, their anxiety? Gentlemen,



this traitor, this German, must go. No matter what excuse may be made for him. For the sake of honour, to re-establish the confidence of our Allies, Stürmer, nay, the whole German clique—must go.

“ Just a few words more, gentlemen, these are history-making epochs. Russia’s hope, Russia’s life, is based on her Alliances ; these Alliances depend on victory. The Russian Duma though it has no power, must help to achieve it. The people stand helpless awaiting your lead, you the representatives of the people are responsible. You must act.”



## INDEX

- Accidents in Mines, 36, 368  
 Alphabet, Corean, 207  
 Amoy, tragedy at, 135  
 "Ancient American," Baldwin's, quoted, 8  
 Annamite, an intelligent, 373  
 Aquarium at Honolulu, 294
- Baboons, large troop of, 87  
 Baldwin's "Ancient America," quoted, 8  
 Bangkok, 372  
 Baranca de Cobar, Mexico, 370  
 Bats, blood-sucking, 28  
 Berri-berri in Malay, 170  
 Betel-nut chewing, 168  
 Birthday of Emperor of Japan, 257  
 "Black Flags," on the march, 148  
 Blake, Sir Henry, anecdote of, 157  
 Blow-pipe, Dutch East Borneo, 384  
 Boats, Malay, 166  
 Boats, Siamese, 373  
 Boer character, 128  
 Boer War, approach of, 90  
 Boer War, conduct of, 129  
 Borneo, British North, 378  
 Borneo, Dutch East, 382  
 Borneo, Dutch, some account of, 181  
 Borneo, Dutch, geographical description of, 182  
 Boxer Rising, 157  
 "Bridging" a river, 119  
 Buddhist monastery at Fukien, 137
- Cañon in Mexico, 369  
 Chemulpo described, 200  
 Cherry-blossom in Japan, 223  
 Chiapas, Mexico, 1, 13  
 Chicago revisited, 290  
 Chinese boat, method of rowing, 144  
 Chinese cooks, 140  
 Chinese house roofs, 138  
 Chinese Mine management, 151  
 Chinese Rebellion of 1851, 148
- Cholera and water-melons, 246  
 Chopsticks, 137  
 Cloisonné, 312  
 Coal in Borneo, 380  
 Coal-mine, Chinese, adventure in, 386  
 Collbran, Henry, his work in Corea, 218  
 Commerce at Harbin, 347  
 "Concentrates," carriage of, 7  
 Cook, capture of a, 25  
 Cooks, Chinese, 140  
 Coolies, Chinese, in S. Africa, 317  
 Corea, early history of, 204  
 Corea, first glimpses of, 198  
 Corea, travelling in, 228, 270  
 Corean houses described, 220  
 Corean method of mining, 229  
 Coreans, character of, 209, 237  
 Coreans, dress of, 210  
 Cormorants, fishing with, 145  
 Crackers, Chinese, a mark of honour, 183
- Devils in Corea, 272  
 Diamond-drill expert, 240  
 Diaz, Porfirio, 53, 369  
 Dinner with a Corean minister of state, 214  
 Doctor, an American one in Mexico, 367.  
 Dress of Coreans, 210  
 Drink regulated at Chiapas, 17  
 Dyak belle, her costume described, 188  
 Dyak, head-hunters, 377  
 Dyak house described, 187  
 Dyak wedding, 189  
 Dynamite, Transvaal monopoly, 90
- Elephant ride in Siam, 375  
 Elephants working, 161  
 Equator, crossing the, 180  
 Exorcising a devil in a Corean mine, 253

- Fair, an annual one in Siberia, 360
- Family, a very mixed one, 203
- Fenshui, 138
- Fenshui, effect upon mining operations, 150
- Fever-trees, 110
- Fire-beetles, 26
- Fishing with Cormorants, 145
- Flood on River Tuman, 343
- Flues, arsenical, in Chinese mine, 152
- Forest-Fire in Canada, 387
- Forest scenery in Borneo, 191
- Frenchman in Dutch East Borneo, 382
- Frostbite in Corea, 260
- Galleries in native mines, Corea, 230
- German Captain, manners of, 371
- Gnu-hunting, 115
- Graves, riot over, in Corea, 244
- Hats, primitive Chinese used in Borneo, 184
- Havana, 2
- Hoare, Bp. Hoare and dinner party, 158
- Honey-bird, 116
- Hong Kong, 140
- Honolulu, aquarium at, 294
- Hot-springs at Onsen, Japan, 196
- Hung Husees (Chinese bandit-soldiers), 309
- Hydraulic working of mines, 291
- Ice forming on Siberian river, 362
- Inn, Japanese, at Seoul, 216
- Irkutsk, 280
- Itaxcomitan, 33
- Japan, Emperor of, birthday celebrations, 257
- Japan, history of, 197
- Japanese military methods, 305
- Japanese, modesty of the, 235
- Japanese soldiers on the march, 304
- Jucheticos, 35
- Jungle and temperament, 168
- Jungle in Malay, described, 166
- Junk, Chinese, 134
- Kampong, a Dyak house, 187
- Khirgese massacre, an absurd story, 361
- Khirgese on the march, 327
- Khirgese races with horses, 328
- Koorgandie, site of an annual fair, 360
- Kuansi, journey to, 145
- Li Hung Chang and the Lily Society, 158
- Locusts, 94, 115
- Lorenzo Marquez, 111
- McCarthy, E.T. } *See page 8 and 9*  
 McCarthy, Mrs. }
- Magato, Baron, 306
- "Manchester Guardian," and an alleged Khirgese Massacre, 361
- Manchuria, 277
- Marimba, musical instrument of Guatemala, 23
- Melon, water, and cholera, 246
- Men, handling of, 46, 70
- Mexican Cañon, 369
- Mexico, 1
- Mexico City, 56
- Miluikoff's speech, 391
- Mill for rice in W. Borneo, 184
- Mine, Atbasar, Siberia, 340
- Mine, Bundi, Malay States, 169
- Mine, Coal & Zinc in Saghalin, 347
- Mine, Hwei-Huen, China, 148
- Mine, Montana, in, 291
- Mine, Palmarejo, Mexico, 368
- Mine, Piggs' Peak, Swaziland, 63
- Mine, Rhaub, Malay States, 159
- Mine, Spassky, Siberia, 328
- Mine, Unsan, Corea, 230
- Mineral deposits in Corea, 250
- Miners, American, in Corea, 239
- Miners, Chiapas, at, 16, 46
- Miners, Khirgese, in Siberia, 329
- Miners, Swaziland, in, 73
- Mining, alluvial gold, in Corea, 229
- Mining camps in Montana, 292
- Mining Engineer, ethics of a, 136
- Mining Engineer, trials of a, 163
- Mining, hydraulic jets, 291
- Missionaries, 226
- Missionaries at Pyeng yang, Corea, 233
- Missionary, a lady of a noble type, 266
- Mitla, ruins of, 10
- Mocking-birds in China taken for an airing, 154
- Monkey, anecdote of a pet, 171
- Moscow, 282
- Mosquitos and site of house in malarial countries, 175
- Moujik, 320

Mudang, or Corean witch, 252  
Mule, on fire, 29

Oak-scrub, the Corean fuel, 220  
Ob river, 331  
Octopus, 294  
Onsen, hot springs at, 196  
Orang-utan, 192

Pallenque, ruins of, 8  
P. and O. service to China, 134  
Pigg's Peak Mine Swaziland, 63  
Pipe-line, fixing a, 44  
Pipe-line in Siam, 373  
Pirates, Chinese, 142  
Police, Japanese, at Nagasaki, 195  
Police, Japanese, Corea, 241  
Pontianac, Dutch W. Borneo, 177,  
179  
Port Arthur, 274  
Post travelling in Russia, 323  
Prisoners' camps in Russia, 350,  
351, 352, 353  
Pumps, Chinese, in Borneo, 184  
Pyrites, Corean method of working  
gold in, 230

MCCARTHY. E. T.  
Visits Mexico, 1  
Reaches mine at Chiapas, 15  
Leaves Chiapas, 53  
Visits Mexico City, 56  
Returns to England, 58  
Visits New Zealand, 58  
Starts as Consulting Engineer,  
60  
Visits Swaziland, 60  
Terrible accident to his son, 84  
Treks to Delagoa Bay, 98  
Reaches Lorenço Marquez, 119  
Sails for Home, 129  
Visits China, 133  
Journey to Kuansi, 142  
Leaves China, 158  
Visits Federated Malay States,  
159  
Visits Selangor, 173  
Visits Borneo, 177  
Visits Corea, 198  
Re-visits Corea, 223  
Loses his daughter, 263  
Leaves Corea, 268  
Reaches England, 285  
Crosses America to Japan, 289  
Re-visits Corea, 302  
Re-visits Durban, 316  
Returns to England, 319  
Visits to various countries since  
1905, 319

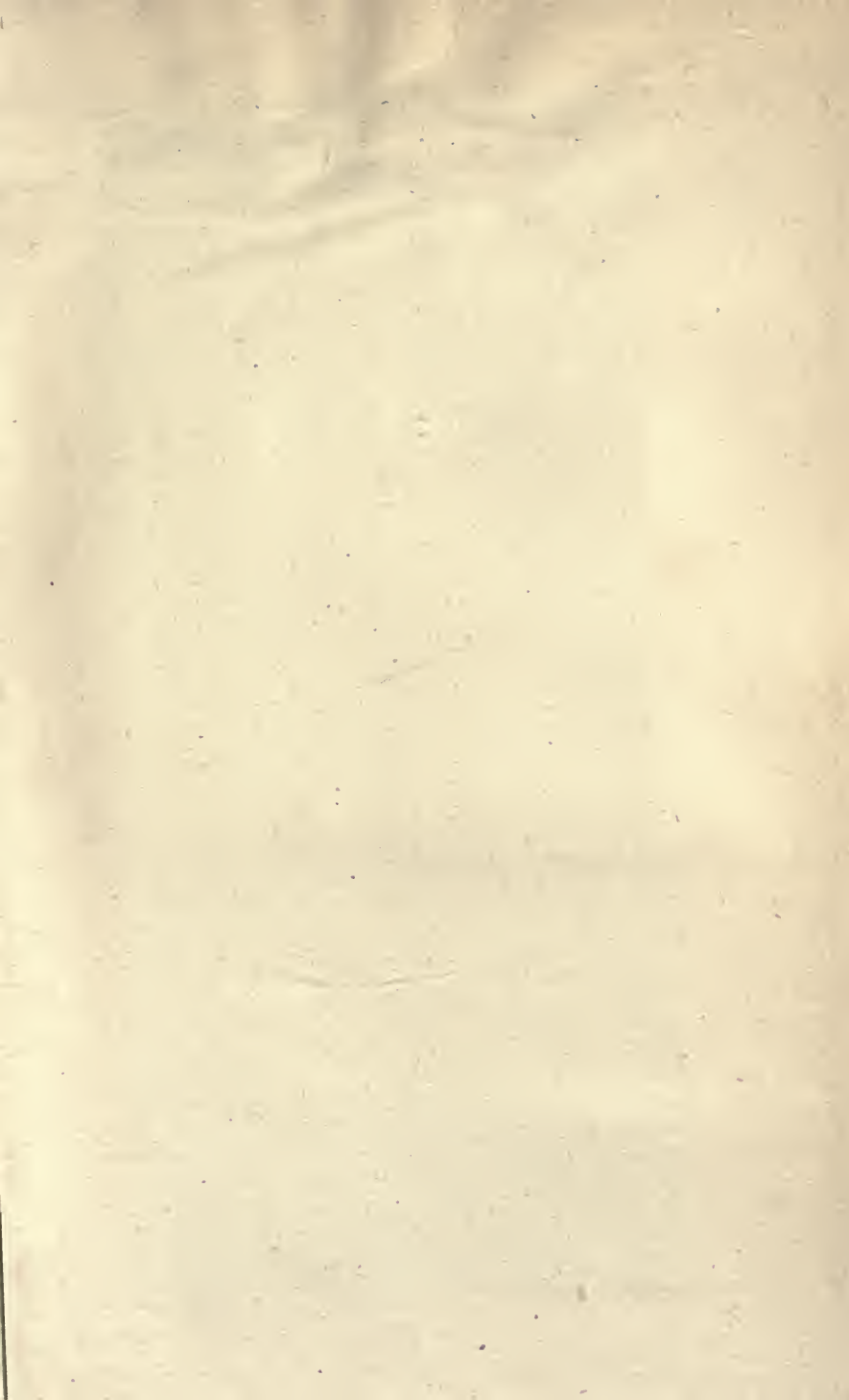
Journeys in Siberia, 320  
Journeys in Transbaikal, 342  
Describes Russia in 1915, 348  
Describes Russia in 1916, 357  
Visit to Mexico, 366  
Visit to Siam, 371  
Visit to British North Borneo,  
377  
Visit to Dutch East Borneo, 382  
Visit to Tong-king, Yu, 385  
Visit to Canada, 387

MCCARTHY, MRS. E. T.  
Description of trek from Swazi-  
land, 101  
Reaches Lorenço Marquez, 111  
Describes Emperor of Japan's  
birthday celebrations, 257  
Describes journey home from  
Corea, 269  
Illness and death of, 389

Refugees at Lorenço Marquez, 124  
Refugees in Russia (1915), 349, 354  
Revolution in Russia (1916), 364  
Riot over graves in Corea, 243  
Roof of Chinese house, 138  
Ropeway, adventure on a, 81  
Rowing, Chinese, 144  
Russia in 1915, 348  
Russian Revolution, 364  
Russia under German Influence,  
355  
Russian revolution, Miluikoff's  
speech, 391

San Juan Bautista, 6, 11  
Scenery of jungle, 168  
Sea appearance off Cuban coast, 2  
Selangor, scenery at, 159  
Seoul described, 219  
Seoul threat against foreigners, 212  
S'hangans and Swazies threatened  
riot, 68  
Sharks fin soup, 297  
Sheep in Corea, 236  
Siberia in 1916, 357  
Silence strike, 333  
Silk, cocoons for sale, 145  
Silkworms' eggs, 143  
Silver mine, slippery ascent to, 156  
Slavery, virtual in Mexico, 12  
Smelting, crude Chinese method  
of, 151  
Snake, venomous, Mexican, 30  
Snake, venomous, S. African, 65  
Spassky mines, 328  
Sport-hunting gnu, 115

- Sports among the Khirgese, 328  
 Stores at the Mine, 51  
 Superstitions among Coreans,  
     254, 272  
 Surf-board, use of, 295  
 Swazie outbreak threatened, 77  
 Swaziland, 62  
  
 Ta-Tong river, Corea, 248  
 Tee O, construction of, 185  
 Temple, lodging in a Chinese, 138  
 Tin deposit in Siam, 376  
 Tin in Perak, 174  
 Tong-king, 385  
 Toys in Corea, 202  
 Travelling in Corea, 270  
 Travelling in Siberia, 324, 334, 338  
 Trek to Delagoa Bay, 95  
 Tringganu, 165  
  
 Troika, 322  
 Tsusheina, Battle of, 301  
 Typhoon off Manila, 384  
  
 Unsan mines, Corea, 236  
 Uxmal, ruined city of, 3  
  
 Wah Wah, monkeys so called, 162  
 Wind-blast, in coal 383  
 Winding, method of in China, 150  
 Witch in Corea, 252  
 Wolves, 335  
 Wuchow, 144  
  
 Yi Yong Ik, a Corean Minister of  
     State, 213  
 Yucatan, 3  
 Yurta, the Khirgese tent, 341, 358



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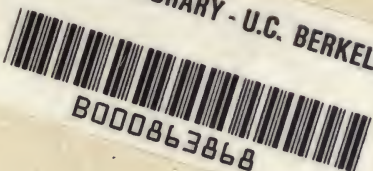
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